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OAKES AMES

A Memoir

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE DEDICATION

OF THE

OAKES AMES MEMORIAL HALL

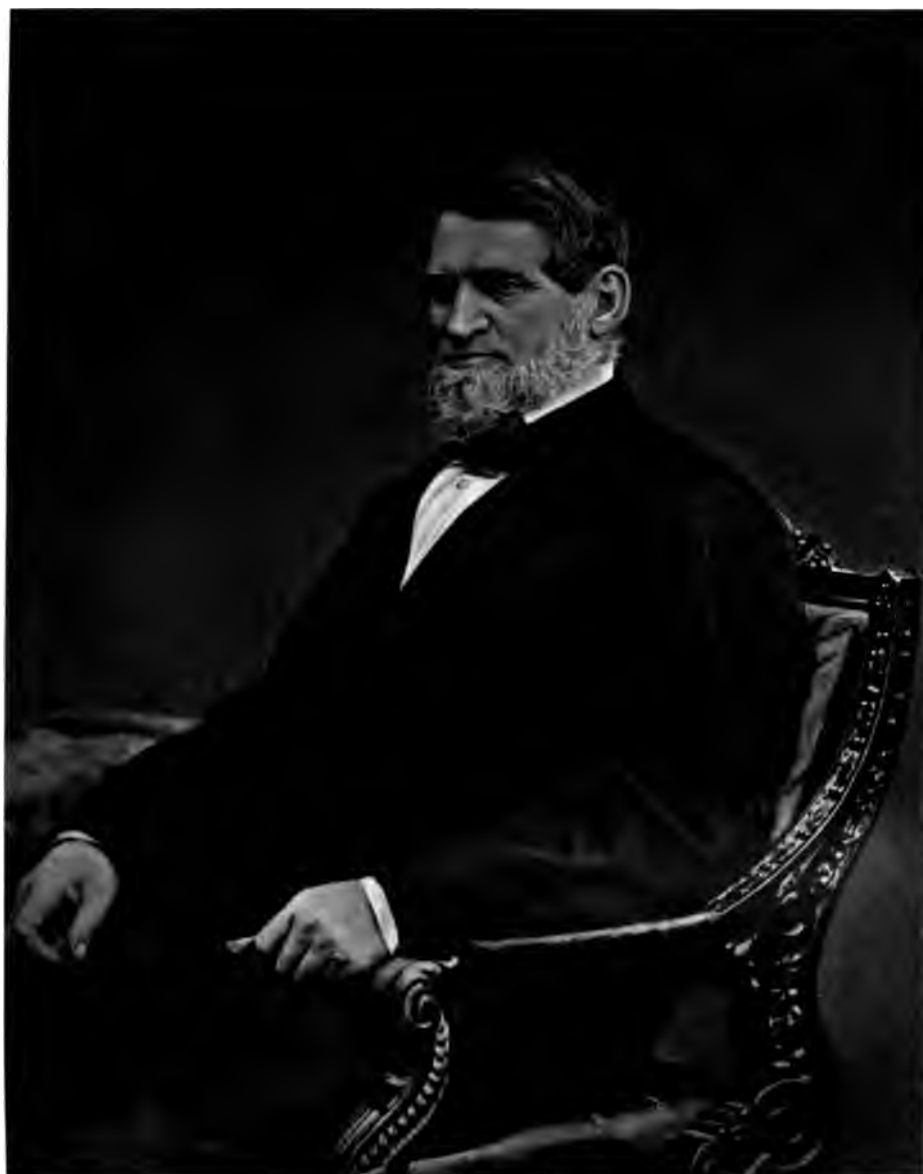
AT NORTH EASTON, MASS.

November 17, 1881

CAMBRIDGE

Printed at the Riverside Press

1883



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OAKES AMES.

OAKES AMES, the eldest son of Oliver and Susannah Ames, was born in Easton, Massachusetts, on the tenth day of January, 1804. His father moved from Bridgewater in the previous year, attracted by the abundance of water-power for manufacturing uses in the region of Easton, which formed the heads of the Taunton River. There the son passed his boyhood and youth, acquiring a district-school education, and assisting his father in the workshop and on the farm. About the age of sixteen he enjoyed the more liberal advantages of a few months' instruction at Dighton Academy; and after that he became the faithful apprentice of his father, until he was afterwards his foreman and chief reliance. He was possessed by nature of a large and athletic frame, which laborious industry developed and matured, so that when he reached manhood he was fully prepared to engage with vigor in the pursuit in which he had been trained, and which was to be the engrossing one of his life.

The first of the name, William Ames, emigrated from Burton, in Somersetshire, England, to Braintree, in Massachusetts Colony, in 1635. His only son was John Ames; his fourth son was Thomas Ames; his eldest son was Thomas Ames; his second son was John Ames; his youngest son was Oliver Ames; and his eldest son was Oakes Ames. On the maternal side, he was fifth in the line of descent from Rev. Urian Oakes, one of the earliest presidents of Harvard College, from whom he took his Christian name. Susannah

Angier, the mother of Oakes Ames, was a descendant of the famous Dr. William Ames, the Francker Professor, whose daughter Ruth, coming to Massachusetts with her mother and brother in 1637, married Edmund Angier, of Cambridge; whose son, Rev. Samuel Angier, married Hannah, daughter of President Urian Oakes, of Harvard University. Their grandson, Oakes Angier, a law student under the elder President Adams, became the father of Susannah Angier, who in April, 1803, became the wife of Oliver Ames.

The repressing influence of the war of 1812 on his father's business — which was the manufacture of shovels — was not without its effect on the mind of the youth, as the crushing disasters of 1837 also left their permanent impress on his mature manhood. The observation of the former helped him to a thorough understanding of the latter. He enjoyed the paternal confidence from the beginning; and on emerging from his minority, he naturally assumed the superintendence of the manufacturing works, and his course of life thereafter was established. From being overseer in the growing works he gradually became his father's main dependence, and with his wife he continued to live in the same house with his parents until they died.

The simple and undeviating rules in the establishment were industry and integrity; to these everything was made obedient. The son Oakes was possessed of great quickness of apprehension in all things pertaining to the business. He drove, but was never driven by it. He developed inventive powers of a high order, and exhibited superior capacity to administer affairs. All that he did advanced the interests of the establishment. He inspired more and more the movement about him. He answered promptly the call of every emergency. Having reached the age of sixty-five, the father, in 1844, withdrew from all further active participation in the business, turning it over absolutely to his sons Oakes and Oliver, from which date the firm bore the name of Oliver Ames and Sons. Five years later followed the discovery of gold in California, and two years after a similar discovery in Australia. The first event, by causing a new and sudden

distribution of population, imparted a stimulus to the building of railroads, and practically inaugurated a new era. The stir pervaded all circles and was felt in all branches of business. This unexpected planting of a modern people on the distant Pacific shores was what gave birth to the conception of a railway across the continent. The expansion of the manufacturing business of Oliver Ames and Sons from that time became rapid and largely profitable. Mining, railroad building, emigration to newly opened territory, and the multiplication of public works united in giving it an impetus that speedily raised it to a high rank in industrial importance. The same spirit of enterprise which became a commanding characteristic of Oakes Ames in after years conspicuously displayed itself during this portion of his business life. He confronted the brief but fierce financial storm of 1857 without disturbance, and all went smoothly and successfully with him for years to come. The growth of the business may be somewhat understood from the statement that since those days one thousand tons of iron, two thousand tons of steel, and five thousand tons of coal pass yearly through the hands of five hundred workmen into the great works, appearing again in the form of those indispensable implements which are not to be separated from the march of civilization.

The gathering clouds of civil war in 1860 caused an anxious search everywhere for the right men to meet the impending calamity. Oakes Ames, true to the Puritan instincts which were his inheritance, had, with other men in Massachusetts, come first to the rescue of Kansas in her hand-to-hand struggle for free institutions, and in a sectional conflict could be relied on to throw his whole weight into the same scale. The newly-formed Republican party in 1860 unanimously named him in convention for Councilor from the Bristol district, and he was chosen with scarcely any opposition. Thus, without any solicitation on his own part, he became one of the cabinet officers of Governor Andrew, who relied on him as he did on few other men around him in that gloomy and threatening period. None were more generous than the famous "War Governor" of Massachusetts in acknowledging the value of the service he then rendered.

The war for the Union was dragging on to the close of its second year, with no visible symptoms of a successful issue, and men of tried character were needed in the government as well as recruits for the army. The national existence was involved in the careful composition of Congress almost as much as in the operations in the field. Requests came to Oakes Ames from all sides to consent to become a congressional candidate in the Second District. Governor Andrew himself was personally urgent. Members of the Council joined their appeals to that of the Governor. Friends and neighbors felt a fresh hope kindle, in the possibility that he would represent them in the national government. There were several members of the party who aspired to the place; but when, a week before the convention, his assent was known to have been obtained, the majority of them withdrew from further contest. The intelligence was carried at midnight by one of his warmest supporters to a well-known citizen of the district, who, roused from his bed and summoned to the window to receive it, exultingly exclaimed in response, "That settles the question in the Second District!"

Enthusiasm immediately pervaded the district. On the informal ballot in convention he received two thirds of all the votes cast, and on the next ballot was nominated with unanimity. The popular vote by which he was sent to Congress was flatteringly large, and accompanied with numerous expressions of public confidence besides those strictly political. Thus entering the thirty-eighth Congress, he continued to be reëlected to the succeeding four Congresses, serving ten years altogether, with an acceptability to his constituents that was felt by him to be his most satisfactory reward. During these ten years in Congress he was a member of the several committees on Manufactures, on the Pacific Railroad, on Revolutionary Claims, and on Roads and Canals. His views met with an attentive hearing, and carried with them admitted weight. He enjoyed the personal confidence of President Lincoln in a large degree, who listened eagerly to his suggestions and advice, and relied on his judgment. He was

reckoned in the group of leaders who gave shape to the legislation of the time, among whom he held an undisputed place for the soundness of his counsel and the steadiness with which he held his opinions. The sentiment of patriotism was deeply seated in his nature. He believed in the unity of his country to the end. He aimed to be as faithful a public servant as he had always been citizen. He desired service before all things.

As a member of the Committee on Railroads, he became interested in the government project of building a road to the Pacific. On the first day of July, 1862, Congress passed an act authorizing and making provision for the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean. It was a practical appeal to the patriotism of the capitalists of the Northern States. The commissioners named in the act met in the following September, and the subscription books were opened, but not a dollar was subscribed. A little more than a year later enough was pledged to authorize the election of a board of directors, which barely preserved the life of the corporation. Congress passed a second act in July, 1864, more liberal than the first, increasing the number of shares, doubling the grant of land, authorizing the company to issue mortgage bonds to the same amount as the government bonds, and making the latter a second instead of a first mortgage on the road. It likewise offered to withhold only one half of the money which the road might earn for the government's transportation, instead of the whole.

No further legislation was had on the road's behalf prior to its completion. It had now been incorporated two years, and in the language of Oakes Ames himself, as one of the railroad committee, it was "in great danger of breaking down." The only practical result of this new offer by Congress was the contract with Hoxie, in the following month, to build one hundred miles of road westward from the Missouri River. Six months demonstrated his inability to execute his contract. The company began to discover that individual contractors were not to be relied on to do the work, — that consolidated means alone were equal to it.

It was at that time that Oakes Ames was approached from one side and another, being well known to favor the road as a member of the railroad committee, to persuade him to take hold of the matter himself. He then did not own a single share of the stock. Men of influence, in Congress and out, with President Lincoln himself, urged him, to the limit of importunity, to enlist in the undertaking. President Lincoln declared the government would do better to give its bonds to the company than to go without the road. He assured Mr. Ames that by building this road he would become the remembered man of his generation.

After nearly a year of solicitation of this kind, and patient deliberation on his own part, he decided to assume the herculean task. He had a just appreciation of the difficulties he was to encounter before he entered upon its execution. He was not a man to engage in such an unparalleled undertaking rashly.

The Credit Mobilier of America, a corporation organized under the laws of Pennsylvania, had assumed the Hoxie contract on the 15th of March, 1865, and at once entered on its performance. But it was not long in discovering, in its turn, that it was unequal to the undertaking. The obstacles were overwhelming. The premium on gold was one hundred and fifty; the first mortgage bonds of the company were unsalable; the government bonds themselves had no fixed value, were payable in currency, and could be sold with not much less difficulty than those of the company; transportation of building material was slow, difficult, and extremely high; the cost of labor was extravagant; and there were no signs of public confidence in the ultimate building of the road, or in its builders ever being remunerated.

At this stage Oakes Ames entered the Credit Mobilier company, and, with the aid of a few associates, brought up the amount of paid subscriptions, by the autumn of 1865, to two and a half million dollars. The railroad company appealed to the construction company to build the road, satisfied that it could do nothing of itself. The latter

corporation did assume the Hoxie contract of one hundred miles, and completed it by October, 1866. Two parties soon developed within the Credit Mobilier company, their purposes being wholly dissimilar: one party desiring simply to make all the profit possible from the construction of the road; the other party resolved to make their profits out of the ultimate value of the road itself. The latter was headed by Oakes Ames. This internal conflict resulted in the stopping of all further contracts, and in the dissipation of the company's funds.

The capital stock was increased fifty per cent., although it was an act attended with much difficulty. This was early in 1867. But without a definite contract it was obvious that all would run to waste. Neither party would recede from its position for some time. At last the contest ended in a compromise. Oakes Ames was allowed to take a contract. It was to be his, and not the company's. Up to the date of the Oakes Ames contract, the Credit Mobilier company had constructed two hundred and forty-seven miles of road, using up all its capital, and making but two six per cent. dividends.

The Oakes Ames contract was for building six hundred and sixty-seven miles of road. It was dated August 16, 1867. The rates per mile varied. Engineering and equipments of every description were to be paid for by the contractor.

Two months later, October 15, 1867, Oakes Ames made an assignment of this contract to seven trustees, who should build the road instead of himself. They were to take his place in everything. The profits of the contract were to be paid over to the individual holders of stock in the Credit Mobilier. The Credit Mobilier stockholders were to give irrevocable proxies to the trustees to vote on six tenths of all their Union Pacific stock, and the Union Pacific stockholders were all to approve the contract. And it was on this contract that the road was built and turned over to the Union Pacific Railroad Company early in 1869.

It is admitted by all parties that Oakes Ames was the only person

who could at that time have taken such a contract. He made no promises, and none were exacted of him. "Of course I must have associates," he said, "but no man shall be wronged; none shall be deprived of his rights. I am an honest man, and I will see that every man is protected." It was determined that the individual stockholders of the Credit Mobilier company should have the profit, rather than the Credit Mobilier as a corporation. He meant that the enterprise should become a substantial one rather than that its value should end with its execution.

With this transfer of his contract the work of Oakes Ames really began. He gave to it all the energies of his nature. For himself he invested a million dollars in the enterprise, and put his entire fortune to the hazard. He personally addressed all his friends to induce them to join him,—men of standing and influence, capitalists of all grades, those in Congress and out of it. He went so far as to offer to guarantee to many the full value of the stock they might purchase, with ten per cent. interest. He was ready to venture everything, so fixed were his determination and his faith. He asked no one to take a risk which he was not willing to take more largely himself.

The road was constructed, and mainly through his exertions and sacrifices. It was completed seven years earlier than the terms of the contract required. From that date onward the government was a gainer, in the expenses of transportation, of millions of dollars annually. While the work was in progress, its builders overcoming the most formidable obstructions, both physical and financial, the country looked on in incredulous wonder. The repeated applause of the press stimulated the public admiration to a very high degree, although it had little effect in increasing the sale of the company's bonds when the proceeds were most needed. With its triumphant completion it was universally felt that the union of the States was indeed indissoluble. The immense advantage to the country began to be seen almost immediately. The popular applause was now as enthusiastic as the general confidence had before been re-

strained. The tide had turned, but the result did not come without a world of effort, unsparing and unremitted. That it should have been succeeded, four years later, by one of those inconsistent and all but inexplicable reversals of the public judgment which furnish the episodes of human history, was as wholly unexpected as it was unreasonable.

Thus was the Credit Mobilier given the credit of having built the Union Pacific, though it was its stockholders, and not the organization itself, who achieved the task and reaped the profits of their hazardous investment. So far as that organization was concerned, it had served its purposes, and would have ceased almost to be remembered except by its stockholders. They had done the work, and done it well.

The whole subsequent trouble arose from the dissensions within it as a corporation, which have been already referred to. The men who had formerly held back, refusing to go any further, seeing what vigor had suddenly been imparted to it by the introduction of new energy, suddenly forgot their old reluctance to share in its responsibilities, and came forward eagerly to demand what but a little time before they had refused on any terms. The idea possessed some minds that this was a new quarry, from which to extract large personal profits on such pretexts as were most convenient. A government inspector, as early as 1867, refused, unless he was paid twenty-five thousand dollars, to report on the sections of the road it was his official duty to examine; and without his report, the government, of course, declined issuing its bonds to the company, and the work of construction was hindered accordingly. There was a spirit abroad that is best described by the offensive term blackmail. Progress and profit soon began to collect all the birds of evil omen in quest of prey. If a government inspector demanded pay for performing his plain official service, what might not be expected of others whose claims were not more substantial? There were lobbyists, too, always on hand to whet their greedy plans on any project that contained the promise of profit, and

they were able to organize hostility in all forms, the sole object of which was purchase for its removal.

There was a bold and concerted attack on the Union Pacific Company in New York in the spring of 1869, about the date when the construction company turned the road over to the railroad company, to obtain control of the company through the orders of state courts, whose judges afterwards found their places in the legislative and popular opinion. The conspirators were resolved to get forcible possession of a franchise which had been made greatly valuable in spite of their opposition; they were inspired by revenge and envy together. The offices were seized under cover of legal procedure. The safes were forced open and a number of bonds abstracted. The clerks, however, managed to secrete and secure most of the books, which were surreptitiously carried over to Jersey City, out of the reach of the New York courts. The Union Pacific Company received a foul blow at that critical period of its opening activity that left it almost a ruin. For the first time it applied to Congress for relief. All it asked was authority to remove its office from New York to Boston, and the request was readily granted.

There was one other untoward experience, and a wholly unexpected one, through which it was called to pass. In the face of the plain contract which the railroad company had made with the government, the Secretary of the Treasury ruled that the government had a right to retain the whole of the money it owed the company for transportation, instead of one half only. The basis for such a decision was that the accumulating interest on the government bonds held by the company warranted the application of all the company's money to its payment which the government held in its hands. The Attorney-General supported this decision of the Secretary in an opinion that, to this day, is pointed to by lawyers as phenomenal for its misinterpretation and illogical conclusions. For the second time the railroad company went to Congress to obtain the authoritative expression of its opinion in a matter that hardly seemed to admit of dis-

pute; and Congress, in 1871, reversed the ruling of the Secretary by a special act conforming to the plain terms of the company's contract with the government, and directed the Secretary to pay over to the company the one half due it for transportation service, which was accordingly done.

Those who were in the construction company being also in the railroad company, they found it necessary for some time after the road was finished to keep it in operation by drafts on their own resources. They were millions of dollars in debt, and the road must be operated in order to guarantee them ultimate relief. The withholding of half the road's government earnings at such a time was a highly obstructive item in their experience. It likewise had the effect to depreciate the value of the company's securities for a time, and thus to cramp proceedings seriously. This decision of the Treasury, so soon set aside by Congress, embarrassed the finances of Oakes Ames to such an extent that he felt compelled to appeal to his creditors for their indulgence. It was the first time in his life he had been driven to such an extremity. They granted his request, however, with generous promptness and unanimity, and he subsequently cleared himself from his temporary embarrassments by meeting every one of his renewed promises as they matured.

But it was the McComb suit that was the parent cause of the trouble, which, by finally being made to take a political coloring, culminated in a panic in Congress during the short session of 1872-73. McComb caught the spirit that was in the air when the road was progressing so rapidly to completion, and saw what he thought was his opportunity. He set up a claim to the right to receive twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of Credit Mobilier stock, which he asserted was due to a friend on account of the subscription made for him early in 1866. McComb, though a member of the Credit Mobilier, was not of the Oakes Ames party that controlled that company in the matter of the Oakes Ames contract. A correspondence, wholly of an explanatory character on one side, took place between Mr. Ames

and Colonel McComb in relation to the distribution of the stock. The former was more particularly anxious to convince McComb that he had not kept certain stock for himself, but had placed it with men of standing and influence, and in so judicious a manner that it would give all possible breadth to the status of the railroad company, and impart to it a truly national character. Without any consciousness of using language that could be subjected to misconstruction, he explained that he had placed such stock where it would do most good. It was a plain man's plain way of speaking. It was these few brief letters of Oakes Ames to a harassing claimant, written only to try to satisfy him that all had been done fairly and justly, that, by malicious misconstruction, inflamed by party passions in the time of a general election, were used for the purpose of wrecking public reputations in the expectation of political advantage. It was a baseless cause, passing through a highly colored medium, that produced such insensate results. It was a strange episode, that could hardly occur again in our political history.

After pressing his claim to no purpose, seeing that the work of building the road had at last been seriously entered upon, in the latter part of 1867 McComb brought suit. This suit, while the completed road was getting into profitable operation, he kept alive until 1872. In that year his counsel came to the Ames party with proposals for a settlement. The claim was still made for twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of stock. It was repudiated, as it had been before. Then McComb's counsel suggested the possibility of the publication of Oakes Ames's letters to McComb, which were written for the very purpose of explaining away the grounds of his claim. The idea conveyed was that the members to whom Oakes Ames admitted that he had assigned shares of Credit Mobilier stock could be disgraced by an exposure of the fact. The one who threw out such a suggestion of course knew the methods to be resorted to for that purpose. Among the names referred to were those of well-known members of Congress, whom it was thought that neither Mr. Ames nor his associates would

permit to be subjected to such dangerous chances. The calculation was that, rather than incur a risk of such a character, they would pay the McComb claim.

But they had reckoned without their host. Wholly unconscious of wrong, either in deed or intention, Oakes Ames turned aside the menace with a smile. Had he been engaged in a wrong act, he would naturally have made haste to cover it up in the only manner in which it could be done. He would have settled the McComb claim from his own pocket. His associates, too, in that case, never would have let the matter proceed to extremities. They knew that Oakes Ames was incapable of doing an improper act, and therefore they felt that he had nothing to express in his correspondence that would imply it. The claim was resisted again, and the threat of exposure was executed.

It is unnecessary to discuss the alleged validity of McComb's claim thus set up to two hundred and fifty shares of Credit Mobilier stock, with an addition of half as many more on account of the fifty per cent. increase of the company's capital. Enough that he, with other stockholders, subscribed an agreement with them all to transfer sixty-five thousand dollars' worth of the capital stock to such parties as T. C. Durant and Oakes Ames "have agreed upon and designate, — say, to Durant parties thirty-seven thousand dollars' worth, and to Ames parties twenty-eight thousand dollars." This agreement also shows that Mr. Ames paid the par value of the shares to the company. In spite of this agreement, however, McComb persisted in his hostility to the company, and at length commenced suit against it and its officers to recover three hundred and seventy-five shares of its stock to his individual use.

McComb filed affidavits, in the summer of 1872, in a Pennsylvania court, that the stock he claimed had been set apart by the Credit Mobilier for Mr. Ames, expressly to distribute among members of Congress, in order to give them interest enough in the road to secure their legislative assistance when it should be needed. He also alleged

that Mr. Ames had received it for that purpose, and for that purpose had distributed it; that it was a corrupt distribution, because he had sold the stock to members of Congress at a price much below what it was worth, and thus bribed them with the prospect of profits. He gave a list of Congressmen to whom he stated that the stock had been transferred on these favorable terms, which list he asserted Mr. Ames had himself furnished him; and he filed, along with his affidavit, certain letters which he said he had received from Mr. Ames, in which the proof of a corrupt use of the stock was stated to be conclusive.

It is established that when, at last, McComb's counsel proposed to one of Mr. Ames's associates to settle for one hundred thousand dollars the latter asked Mr. Ames if he had ever attempted to influence any member of Congress by a sale of the stock below its value; and that the latter denied the imputation in the most strenuous manner, maintaining his integrity and challenging the scrutiny of the world. He declared he had never written to McComb any such letters as the latter claimed to have in his possession, and none which were fairly capable of a corrupt construction. These letters were even offered to be surrendered to Mr. Ames, if he would come to some terms of settlement. But he knew that as McComb had no claim whatever for stock, so he could have no letters of his that could incriminate him.

The letters were made public in a New York journal of extended circulation, on the 4th of September, 1872, with all the arts of practiced sensationalism. It was while a presidential and a general congressional election was pending. It is difficult to account for the excitement that at once ran wild through the country according to any rules of reason or morality. The members of Congress whose names were involved seemed to have been terror-stricken. The fire thus kindled broke forth in a flame. There must have been a maze of transactions in which Congressmen were engaged that would not bear exposure, in order to suddenly precipitate such a storm. There would never have been so much fear, if there were not a great deal of

undiscovered guilt. Besides this, a check had been administered to a long course of general profusion by the growing public disfavor. The newspapers found this new charge the very fuel they wanted for feeding the flames of popular disapprobation, and they made it go as far as it would.

It was alleged, in order to carry out the idea of corruption, that the Credit Mobilier stock had made enormous profits. It was recklessly charged that Oakes Ames had distributed thirty thousand shares of stock as bribes, having a value of nine million dollars. The records of the Pennsylvania court in which suit was brought were spread before the public, — how obtained has never yet been explained; and leading public men were spoken of as if they had been bribed to do legislative favors for the road. All was suddenly tumultuous uproar. As the loud echoes of party passion multiplied, the low voice of reason grew silent altogether. It was all consternation within and accusatory aggressiveness without. No one knew the extent to which the rest were either guilty or innocent. There was political advantage to be gained on one side at the cost of political ruin on the other. The party seeking control naturally abated nothing of the rancor or recklessness of the charges brought against its opponent. The party in possession contained an inconvenient number of leaders, who were not specially inclined to make haste to set up a mutual defense. There was little real community of sentiment except in relation to the party seeking their defeat.

And there was a spirit abroad that was disposed to sit in judgment on the character of past legislation. A reaction was fast setting in from the flush times of the past few years. The day of general reckoning was near. All sorts of scandals in official life were being dragged to the light. Hardly any one connected with the government knew his precise status in a time when all things were reeling. A reign of terror had begun. In the circles of power no one could say whether he was safe or not. The atmosphere was heavy with the taint of evil rumors. Characters never suspected of impurity suffered from the

prevailing spirit of detraction. If it was the incoming of the wave of reform, it promised to be one of destruction only. The inspiring motive of that political campaign never had its parallel in this country. It was a campaign of detraction and malice, terrorism and panic.

When Congress met in December, it was impossible for the dominant party to ignore these fearful assaults on its reputation. An investigation by select committee was at once ordered by the House of Representatives, and entered upon with little delay. The excitement raised by the political canvass was thus continued by Congress. Parties ranged themselves strictly on this issue of bribery. One did not scruple to employ any weapons that would bring discomfiture to its opponent, even though it destroyed the highest reputations; the other was ready to confess to an almost equal degree of unscrupulousness in adopting measures of self-defense. The one difficult thing to do was to elicit the truth, and the whole truth. But for the transparent honesty of one man in Congress, it is questionable if the facts had ever been brought to the light just as they were. That man was Oakes Ames. Solicited and urged as he was to sustain the contradictory statements of the panic-stricken men about him, he never for an instant swerved from the path he had followed without deviation all his life. No member of Congress could rely on him to testify what was not strictly true, though it were to save him from political ruin; he would not have done it to save himself. It is above all things singular that such a man could be suspected of corrupt practices, and condemned on the charge of having pursued them.

The Poland committee was directed to discover if any members had been guilty of bribing or receiving bribes; the Wilson committee was appointed to discover if the government had been defrauded. The popular clamor forced open the doors of the committee-rooms, that the proceedings might be in the face of day, and nothing be hidden from the public eye. It was enough that it was charged that the people had been cheated in the construction of this railroad, and that members of Congress had been bribed. It was the most difficult of

all problems to know how to appease this aroused popular sentiment. The leaders of the party in power were confounded, hardly knowing which way to turn. When they saw that the people would not suffer an investigation to proceed with closed doors, they saw, too, that it would not do to try to palliate the offense charged. They felt that vindication now was not so easy as the offer of a sacrifice. In that period of panic, when all hung on the testimony of one man, and he incapable of untruth in any form, it occurred to them that in visiting punishment upon him they would vindicate themselves, and destroy the damning effect of his imperturbable veracity.

The trouble all came from the denials made by certain members of Congress during the canvass that they had ever owned any of the Credit Mobilier stock, or had anything to do with it. But for this the storm would have blown over before Congress assembled. It is scarcely supposable that McComb or his counsel could have counted on so effective an ally for their purpose as this panic among congressmen proved.

When Congress met in December, the excitement had not sufficiently abated to allow the subject to rest for ever so brief a time, and Speaker Blaine, calling Mr. S. S. Cox to the chair, took the floor, and proceeded to review the matter, closing his remarks with a proposal to appoint a special committee to investigate the charges against members of Congress, and report thereon to the House. There was not an objection raised to it. The resolution adopted by the House read as follows :—

“Whereas, accusations have been made in the public press, founded on the alleged letters of Oakes Ames, a Representative from Massachusetts, and upon the alleged affidavit of Henry S. McComb, a citizen of Wilmington, in the State of Delaware, to the effect that members of this House were bribed by Oakes Ames to perform certain legislative acts for the benefit of the Union Pacific Railway Company, by presents of stock in the Credit Mobilier of America, or by presents of a valuable character derived therefrom ; therefore,

“Resolved, That a special committee of five members be appointed by the

Speaker *pro tempore*, whose duty it shall be to investigate and ascertain whether any member of this House was bribed by Oakes Ames, or any other person or corporation, in any matter touching his legislative duty.

“Resolved further, That the committee have the right to employ a stenographer, and that they be empowered to send for persons and papers.”

Without a day's delay the committee proceeded to its work. It was composed as follows: Luke P. Poland, of Vermont, chairman; Nathaniel P. Banks, of Massachusetts; James B. Beck, of Kentucky; William E. Niblack, of Indiana; George W. McCrary, of Iowa. It sat daily until about the middle of February, examining every person who had any knowledge of the subject inquired into. Each member of Congress who was charged with having had any interest in the Credit Mobilier appeared and gave his testimony.

The unprecedented character of the whole proceeding did not then impress Congress or the public as it did at a later period and when the excitement was over; in that it was an investigation into the conduct of men for which the sitting Congress could not hold them responsible, and that, even if found guilty, they could not be punished in a parliamentary, much less in a legal, sense. The offense, if there was one, had been committed five years before, and could not come within the legislative jurisdiction of a Congress which then had no existence. No statement could very well make it more apparent that the whole thing was the chaotic result of a political panic. The plain unreasonableness of it in every view showed that the party in the majority had silently predetermined to save itself from the effect of a popular clamor by making a personal sacrifice. The leaders of the time, who had clearly lost their heads, thought that the excited public temper must be appeased, at any rate, and that it could not be done so easily as by throwing all the blame—assuming that there was any blame—on the mysterious Credit Mobilier and Oakes Ames.

A perusal at this day of the reported testimony before the committee is not calculated to exalt one's estimate of human nature when found in conspicuous places. The denials which had been so freely

made by members of Congress, while the presidential and congressional canvass was pending, their authors presumed would be upheld by the statements of Oakes Ames before the committee. They had not reckoned on the inconvenient factor of truth in the problem they had themselves proposed for solution. There never were, in fact, but two ways out of the difficulty: either they should have admitted outright, as a few did, that they had purchased Credit Mobilier stock, which nobody would have questioned their right to do, or Oakes Ames should have confirmed their denials by falsehood of his own. They had yet to learn that of this he was incapable. Those who confessed that they had bought the stock, and felt that no wrong was done, were never afterwards placed under the ban of public condemnation. It was the denial and the prevarication that wrought all the mischief, by exciting suspicion from the first that the Credit Mobilier was a machine for corruption, when it was a construction company merely.

The Wilson committee was raised to discover what connection the Credit Mobilier had with the building of the Union Pacific Railroad, and to see if the government had in any way been defrauded. The final report of this committee showed a surprising misconception of the whole business. The political excitement had confused this committee equally with the other one. It did not see that there was no connection between the Credit Mobilier and the Oakes Ames contract; that as a corporation it had never received anything from that contract; that, except from the money paid it by the seven trustees of the Oakes Ames contract, the Credit Mobilier had never declared a dividend beyond the twelve per cent. one extending over two years; that all the capital the Credit Mobilier ever had was sunk in the construction of a section of the road; and that it was plucked by its early managers, so that it had no power to do anything, fraudulent or otherwise.

Nor did this committee see, either, how the government was related to the two Pacific roads. It appeared to think that the gov-

ernment had loaned them money from its treasury, when the fact was that it had never advanced them one dollar, and had never been asked to. It loaned them its credit, and that was all; and for that loan they are still obligated, and are to-day engaged in the task of providing for its repayment in full. The government loaned its notes, in the form of bonds, which the Union Pacific builders sold from time to time on such terms as they were able. The security for its loan consisted of a second mortgage on the road. The committee reported that the government could rightly declare the company had forfeited its franchise. And they stated the profit of construction to be nearly three times what it was.

They recommended that a suit be instituted against every individual who had ever received any of the dividends declared by the construction company from the profits of construction. And a suit was subsequently begun by the Attorney-General, obediently to this recommendation, to recover in equity all the property which it was assumed had been wrongly taken from the government. But in 1879 the Supreme Court of the United States affirmed the decision of the Circuit Court of Connecticut, declaring that there was "no right to relief on the part of the United States founded on the charter contract;" that "the company has constructed its road to completion, keeps it in running order, and carries for the government all that is required of it;" that "it owes the government nothing that is due, and the government has the security which by law it provided. Nor does the bill show anything which authorizes the United States, as the depository of a trust, public or private, to sustain the suit." The Court argued thus: "The government made its contract and bargained for its security. It had a first lien on the road by the original act of incorporation, which would have made its loan safe in any event. But in its anxiety to secure the construction of the road, — an end more important to the government than to any one else, and still more important to the people whom it represented, — it postponed this lien to another mortgage, that the means might be raised to com-

plete it." . . . "It is difficult to see any right which the government has as a creditor to interfere between the corporation and those with whom it deals." . . . "We are unable, therefore, to see any relief which the United States would be entitled to in a court of equity, under this bill, on account of its contract relations with the defendant." . . . "A court of justice is not called on to inquire into the balance of benefits and favors on each side of this controversy, but into the rights of the parties as established by law, as found in their contracts, as recognized by the established principles of equity, and to decide accordingly. Governed by this rule, and by the intention of the legislature in passing the law under which this suit is brought, we concur with the Circuit Court in holding that no case for relief is made by the bill, and the decree of that court dismissing it is accordingly affirmed." And this was what finally came of the Wilson committee's report.

In regard to the Poland committee, no witness appeared but McComb himself to allege corrupt motives against Oakes Ames. His testimony stands without support in this particular. He produced the letters written him by Mr. Ames, which were explanatory altogether and replies to his own, and gave them the only interpretation which suited his now notorious purpose.

On his own part, Mr. Ames denied ever having had such conversations with McComb as the latter testified to. He denied ever having admitted to him the things alleged. He asserted in the most positive manner of which he was capable that he had never entertained the design of influencing legislation for the Pacific Railroad by giving the stock of the construction company to members of Congress. He stated that whatever stock they had of him he had sold to them, as he had to others, when it was below par, and when it was a difficult matter to dispose of it at all; and that they purchased it solely on his assurances that it would pay them a profit, sooner or later. He said that such a thing as corrupting legislation was never in his mind, and his statement was supported by the fact that the road wanted no

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further legislation, for it already had all that was necessary. He explained that his letters to McComb were replies to the letters of the latter, containing inquiries which he simply sought to answer. And in order, if possible, to discourage further attempts to obtain possession of the stock claimed, he had aimed to convince McComb that he was doing only what would result in the common benefit, and not merely in that of himself personally.

And since the letters were written for the purpose only of satisfying McComb, and thereby silencing his claim, they were expressed in familiar and unguarded language, with no reference to their ever being made public in any future contingency. They were always written in haste, when business was urgent, and in the familiar strain in which men address one another who are personally interested in the same enterprise. He freely admitted that he had sold the stock of the Credit Mobilier to members of Congress, but he declared that he sold it for its stated price, and before the rise in its value took place. This latter point formed the pivot on which the charge of bribery turned; for if he had not sold the stock to members of Congress for less than its value, he clearly could have offered them nothing which would furnish the least inducement for legislative action in his favor.

The resolution adopted by the House empowered the committee "to investigate and ascertain whether any member of this House was bribed by Oakes Ames, or any other person or corporation, in any matter touching his legislative duty."

The committee finally reported as follows: "Whereas, Mr. Oakes Ames, a Representative in this House, from the State of Massachusetts, has been guilty of selling to members of Congress shares of stock in the Credit Mobilier of America for prices much below the full value of such stock, with intent thereby to influence the votes and decisions of such members in matters to be brought before Congress for action; therefore, resolved, that Mr. Oakes Ames be, and he is hereby expelled from his seat as a member of this House."

Here was clearly an attempt of a later Congress to purge or pun-

ish for a former one, — a thing unheard of till then. Before the discussion on this remarkable report closed, brief and hurried as it was, as the last days of the session approached, the lawyers in Congress, represented by the House Judiciary Committee, made a report in direct opposition to the report of the investigating committee, declaring that Congress had no right or power to expel a member for acts committed prior to his election as a member of that body. This at last induced the House to substitute the resolution to censure for the resolution to expel. But the right to do the one was no better laid than the right to do the other, for a subsequent Congress could not take cognizance of the actions of the members of a previous one. There is no question that Congress is free at any time to purge itself of offending members, the right to expel being clearly implied in the right to admit; but no offense committed by a member of a former Congress can be imputed to a member of a subsequent one, even though it be the same individual who is a member of both. Nothing goes to prove more convincingly that Congress, during the session of 1872-73, was confused by its fears and blinded by its selfishness, in committing an act that is no more amenable to common sense than to common justice. It voted to censure a member for what he was alleged to have done in the past, before it existed; it would not have been more senseless to censure him for something which it apprehended he might, if he should continue in congressional life, do in the future.

The charge brought against Oakes Ames was bribery. The only question at issue, then, is this: Was the charge of bribery sustained? The committee itself says it was not. All the facts and circumstances show it was not. There was nothing and no one to sustain the charge but Mr. McComb; and against his testimony was that of the accused, flatly contradicting him at every point. Congress at least had no good reason for preferring to believe the former to the latter.

“In his negotiations with these members of Congress,” say the committee, “Mr. Ames *made no suggestion* that he desired to secure their favorable influence in Congress in favor of the railroad company;

and whenever the question was raised as to whether the ownership of this stock would in any way interfere with, or embarrass them in, their action as members of Congress, he assured them it would not." And the committee also say that they "have not been able to find that any of these members of Congress have been affected in their official action in consequence of their interest in Credit Mobilier stock." They were obliged to admit this, even while recommending his expulsion under the investigation of the charge of bribery; and this was the gist of the whole matter. So that, while finding Oakes Ames *not guilty* of the charge preferred against him, they found that he deserved expulsion the same as if he were.

That is all the logic or sense there is to be found in this most remarkable of reports from a congressional investigating committee. It was punishment without guilt; nay, worse, it was punishment inflicted by the judge after admitting the innocence of the accused. Such a maze of conflicting, unreasonable, and cowardly feelings as led to a result otherwise so unaccountable, is not to be threaded either by analysis or conjecture. A verdict of this sort stands against those who find it rather than against the one sought to be overcome.

Not only were the committee unable to discover any act of bribery, but the facts and circumstances all render it impossible. Even if the verdict had been otherwise in this respect, it would not stand unsupported by the facts; the two certainly cannot contradict one another. And the pivotal, the vital, fact in this accusation is the one that relates to *the date of the sale* of the Credit Mobilier stock to members of Congress. If it could be made to appear that the stock was sold them below par after it had greatly appreciated, that would be the end of it; there could be no more defense. But it appeared that all the contracts made by Mr. Ames with members for selling them the stock were made prior to any dividends being declared, and on his personal assurance only that the investment would be a profitable one. As for the allegation of McComb that the stock was *given* to members, that never received serious attention from any side. The

testimony of those who took it was decisive on that point. It is therefore of the first importance to know when the sales to members were actually made.

All who had the stock testified to having purchased it immediately after the opening of Congress in the session of 1867-68. That was before it had reached par. The first dividend was declared on the 12th of December, 1867, and paid January 3, 1868. It was that dividend which gave an impetus to its market value. *Now when did Congress actually assemble that winter? Ordinarily it would have been on the first Monday in December. But there was an adjournment of the former session from a late day in the summer to the 21st day of November.* The adjourned session thus ran into the regular or short session, and to all intents became a part of it. So that, by the testimony of the purchasing members themselves, it was during the latter part of November and the early days of December that Mr. Ames held his conversations with them respecting the purchase of the stock. Not one of them testified that he had bought it *after* the first dividend was declared. Mr. Ames likewise charged all of them interest on the stock at its par value from the July previous. This little circumstance alone disposes of every suggestion of bribery, and goes to prove both a sale and the price. For who, it may be asked, ever before thought of taking interest on a bribe? Or what person sought to be corrupted ever before consented to pay it?

It is a remarkably singular circumstance that all parties should have entirely forgotten the fact of this extraordinary adjournment of Congress in 1867, owing to the political excitement of that period. It was never alluded to in the testimony either of Mr. Ames himself or of the members involved; which also goes to show how much a matter of the past, in relation to the Congress of 1872-73, the whole transaction was. Had this single fact been recalled while the investigation was pending, it would have fixed the question of the stock's value at the time of its sale beyond further dispute. As a matter of fact, however, the stock was offered freely at par, after the opening of the adjourned

session on the 21st of November, and there were few or no buyers, and it was sold at less than par, at that.

The testimony is unvarying that it was before there was any rise in its value that the stock was sold to members of Congress, and at a time when it could not be sold at par in the market. Mr. Ames offered it as a good investment only, and they took it because, and only because, they confided in his integrity and superior business judgment. They took it at par and interest from July. He did not promise them any dividends, for at that time it could not be foretold when one would be declared. It was all indefinite, and the situation was a wholly speculative one. There was a strong opposition to making the first dividend at the time it was declared; and not for some time afterwards was there an upward movement in the stock.

Then it was that Mr. Ames called on the Credit Mobilier Company to issue to him the stock which he had thus agreed to deliver, and for which he had long before paid the cash from his own pocket. It was with this issue, and this delivery according to contract, the McComb trouble began, after a dividend had finally given an impetus to the market value of the stock. The motive was selfishness, and the means were misrepresentation. The letters of Mr. Ames to McComb about this time were merely an explanation in answer to the latter's demands, as has before been stated.

The stock was issued to Mr. Ames because he had paid for it; and he delivered it as he had agreed to do. He delivered it after it had begun to appreciate, when it was worth much more than when he sold it. Would any but a truly honest man have done such a thing? Was a man who did do it the one to offer bribes, even allowing that they could be made serviceable; which, in his case they notoriously could not, and, according to the report of the investigating committee, they certainly were not?

The testimony of the inculpated members was read as it appeared with excited interest from one end of the country to the other. The reputations of a number of leading public men were involved, but it

is now apparent that they would not have been if they had not themselves displayed the timidity which gave rise to the popular suspicions of guilt. Their solicitude to cover up or deny their transactions naturally created the impression that the transactions themselves were wrong. No wrong would have been imputed but for this. It might have been charged that they had been guilty of an indiscretion, or even an impropriety, but no one would have thought of going further than this against them.

But if there was fault, it was not that of Oakes Ames altogether. As soon as the Credit Mobilier stock began to rise in value, he was besieged by members who claimed that they had previously agreed to take it of him, and now demanded its delivery. Many of them never would have come to him for it at all but for its rapid appreciation. They had been offered opportunities to take it, but the only answer they made was that "they would see." This pressure of claims placed Mr. Ames in a position in which he found it difficult to decide what to do, and still not prejudice the standing of the company and the road. He had, therefore, to draw the line between such engagements as were known to be positive and those which were uncertain and contingent. It was this state of things with him that must supply the interpretation to at least his first letter to McComb, which aimed to show the latter that the writer was not favoring himself or any particular section of the country in his distribution. He wrote thus: "You say I must not put too much in one locality. I have assigned, as far as I have gone, to four from Massachusetts, one from New Hampshire, one Delaware, one Tennessee, one Ohio, two Pennsylvania, one Indiana, one Maine, and I have three to place, which I shall place where they will do most good to us." McComb had complained that Mr. Ames might have disposed of the stock among his own personal friends, and the latter sought to satisfy him that he had distributed it in a way to represent, so far as possible, the entire country. His language was that he had "assigned" it. He was a man who used plain words, and sought for nothing more than to convey his

real meaning. When he employed the term "assigned," he merely intended to say that he had decided to divide up the stock as afterwards described, and primarily with a view to having the influential men of all sections alike feel a personal interest in the road; and such men were the Representatives in Congress. The three thousand, which he said he should "place where they will do most good to us," he contemplated such a disposition of as would benefit McComb's interest in the Pacific road equally with his own. This free and unguarded style of expression in a business matter is the very best evidence of honesty, and cannot justly be interpreted at variance with the recognized character of the writer.

Respecting the question of the purchase of stock of such a character by members of Congress, little need be said; but the occasion justifies the production, in this place, of the statement of at least one member, which is taken from the Poland committee report. He says, "I had no idea of wrong in the matter. Nor do I now see how it concerns the public. No one connected with either the Credit Mobilier or the Union Pacific Railroad ever directly or indirectly expressed, or in any way hinted, that my services as a member of Congress were expected in behalf of either corporation, in consideration of the stock I obtained, and certainly no such services were ever rendered. I was much less embarrassed, as a member of Congress, by the ownership of Credit Mobilier stock than I should have been had I owned stock in a national bank, or in an iron furnace, or a woolen-mill, or even been a holder of government bonds; for there was important legislation, while I was in Congress, affecting all these interests, but no legislation whatever concerning the Credit Mobilier. I can therefore find nothing in my conduct in that regard to regret. It was, in my judgment, both honest and honorable, and consistent with my position as a member of Congress; and as the investment turned out to be profitable, my only regret is that it was no larger in amount."

There was no disgrace attached to a statement like this; if all the

rest had made a similar one there could have been no cause for scandal; and it manifestly is the essence of injustice to make one man, who has committed no fault, bear the burden which others would properly have to carry for themselves. If he might build the Pacific Railroad, though a member of Congress, what could make it any more questionable for them as his copartners and coöperators?

The debate that followed, to the final substitution of the resolution of censure for that of expulsion, was compressed into a space of time unjustly disproportioned to the gravity of such action as was proposed. But the session was to end on the 4th of March, and with it the ten years' congressional career of Oakes Ames terminated also. Many of the leading members and the most impressive speakers participated in the debate. The evidence accompanying the report of the investigating committee was too voluminous for any one to read with care and mentally digest; hence the debate became more dramatic in its spirit than judicial, and was not greatly calculated to advance the cause of justice reasonably and dispassionately. The House appeared far more anxious to emerge from the cloud it found itself involved in than to decide rightly on a question of punishment where no guilt could be demonstrated. The speakers were many of them eloquent and forcible, but the common reason had been dethroned for the time by the panic wrought by political clamor, and safety was eagerly sought at the cost of justice and truth. To this day, there has never been heard a voluntary defender of the action of Congress at that time. It is recorded but to excite the universal wish that it might be forgotten.

We shall proceed to recite the leading points of two of the ablest and most impressive of the speeches delivered on the floor in defense of Mr. Ames. They are that the committee only apprehended that there might be in the future, in some indefinable shape which could not be anticipated, some legislation proposed or done, which would be hostile to the Pacific road; and Mr. Ames so desired to interest members of Congress as to stimulate their activity and attract their atten-

tion to the subject. The alleged intention of Mr. Ames to influence the members who purchased this Credit Mobilier stock was in no instance communicated to them; whenever they asked if the ownership of this stock would in any way interfere with or embarrass them in their action as members of Congress, he assured them it would not. The committee did not find that members had any other purpose in taking the stock than to make a profitable investment. They were not able to find that any of these members of Congress were affected in their official action by their interest in the stock. Mr. Ames was not charged with urging any one to take the stock; on the contrary, it was proved that several members who did take it themselves made the first advance, either by asking his advice about an advantageous investment, or in some other way that finally led to their purchasing it.

The actual statement of the committee, then, is briefly this: first, that he bribed his friends; second, that they did not know they were bribed; third, that they were not affected by the bribe; and, fourth, that neither he nor the persons bribed knew what those persons were to do, or to abstain from doing, in consideration of the bribes. Yet he is found guilty of bribery because he made these sales of stock. One person alone can no more commit bribery than one person can commit a conspiracy; it takes two parties to do it. Nor can there be bribery unless the person bribed is to do or to abstain from doing something. It is absurd, the idea that a member may bribe a fellow member of Congress by making him a present or doing him a favor, without in any way notifying the latter what he expects him to do or not to do, but that he is only apprehensive that at some indefinite time in the future something may occur which may prejudice his interest, when he may need the assistance of his friend.

A man does not usually bribe his friends, those who are already committed to his side of the case and in favor of his interest. Bribes are given to men to convert them, to change them. They are offered to those who are disinclined, in order to prevail on them to do

what the briber desires them to do. The committee say in their report that all these parties who invested in this stock were already the friends of this railroad company. Mr. Oakes Ames is an old man ; a self-made man of character, of reputation beyond impeachment wherever he has been known ; a man of large enterprise, of great wealth, but whose fortune has been carved out by himself ; a man who shouldered a responsibility which no other man in the country could be found to shoulder ; a man who embarked in a great enterprise, from which other men and capitalists shrank, his entire private fortune.

He has been a member of Congress for many years, and what new thing has he done that was not known to all before ? What has transpired during this Congress, in relation to the doings of Mr. Oakes Ames, that was not sufficiently patent years ago ? Everybody in Congress and out of it, who knew anything about the Union Pacific Railroad, knew of the existence of the Credit Mobilier, — knew that Mr. Oakes Ames held that stock, and it was said he was making large profits. What new thing, what new iniquity, what crime, should make all this excitement ? Is the Credit Mobilier stock any more wicked and iniquitous now than it was four years ago ? We all knew he held it then, and it was allowed to pass ; but now, when he is within seven days of bidding good-by to this hall, when he is within one week of taking his final departure from Congress, it is proposed, in the very last days of his political and congressional life, to expel him. For what ? For selling Credit Mobilier stock which he held years ago, and which we all knew at that time that he owned.

Oakes Ames, said the other speaker, is a man so truthful that to save himself he would not tell a lie, when the committee now say if he would only lie he would be safe. We have not the right, constitutional or legal, to expel any member for a crime alleged to have been committed by him five years ago, before his election to this House. Besides, the laws provide for the punishment of crime. At the hour when nearly one half of this Union was struggling to over-

throw the other, when the earth resounded to the tramp of armed men in the field, in the darkest hour of our fortunes, Oakes Ames came forward, and placed down eight hundred thousand dollars as his subscription, to send the railroad across the continent that should hold the East and West together, because he had seen the North and South struggling to separate. It may have been done from motives of patriotism or motives of gain. He trusted his country's future, and his act was patriotic; and if to do good to his country and mankind was his motive, he did well, and no man has the right or the power to say it was not well.

If there is a man in the House who will rise in his place and say that he does not in his heart believe Oakes Ames is an honest and truthful man, he is yet to be discovered. Every one believes substantially every word of his testimony. The committee itself has certified to its truth. He kept debit and credit with those who allowed him to be the trustee of their property in his simple way, but kept it with an accuracy that shows more of truthful honesty than the account-books of the most resplendent counting-room in the land.

His own story is that he was brought into this Pacific Railroad after a great deal of persuasion, when all other capitalists faltered, with his brother; and that they then went forward with the enterprise, asking for no legislation in behalf of the road, and expecting none. The legislation providing for the subrogation of the bonds of the United States to those of the road was had in 1864, before the Ames family had anything to do with it. He took stock in the road, and he agreed with some of the best men in the country to go into a corporation for the purpose of building this road, foreseeing that its magnitude might swamp any individual contractor. They tried Mr. Hoxie on three hundred and twenty-seven of the easiest miles of the road, and he failed to carry out his contract; and they organized the Credit Mobilier to construct the remainder.

Holding the stock of the Credit Mobilier merely is not to be alleged against him as a crime. He made no concealments of his part

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in it. In 1867 and 1868, everybody in Congress knew that he, a member of Congress also, was a holder of that stock. His constituents all knew it. Instead of seeking to conceal anything, he became the recipient of unstinted praise for his great enterprise and public spirit. His financial judgment was trusted and confided in. His advice was asked and followed in investment matters, and none thought of wrong. There was no guile in him. He embarked his all in this undertaking, and before he was done it broke him down. The catastrophe he might have apprehended was just what inspired him to interest certain men, then in Congress and out of it, in the stock, that they might be watchful to see that no wrong was done to the road, and through the road to the government. And for this he is charged with bribery. Nevertheless, the committee expressly declare that nobody was bribed by Oakes Ames.

"I have known him long and well," the speaker concluded. "I have known him when he was a member of the Council of Governor Andrew, and aided him in troops to save the country. He went forward side by side with the illustrious War-Governor of Massachusetts, in those great measures which filled our armies and carried on our war, trusted, honored, and beloved. I have known him since. I have seen him when bankruptcy and ruin fell upon him because he had taken part in this great national work. I have seen him crushed down to earth with obligations and debts not incurred for himself, but in the service of his country; and yet such was the force of his honesty and integrity of character that each and all of his creditors gave him extension of credit, and every one has been paid to the uttermost farthing. It is to his credit that he had to absent himself from your committee while investigating his honesty, to go home and do the last act of an honest man by paying up the last dollar of his extended debt. Such is Oakes Ames."

During the excitement of the canvass of the previous autumn, though not a candidate himself, Mr. Ames issued an explanatory circular to his constituents, which deserves mention in this particular

place. He openly styled the charges of bribery "infamous." He said they were made against him and some of his associates in Congress "by Henry S. McComb, in a suit against the Credit Mobilier, in the State of Pennsylvania, for the purpose of obtaining money wrongfully from the company, — as every one of the stockholders believed then and believes now. All the executive officers of the company and several of its largest stockholders, including myself, have answered in said suit, long since, under oath, that the charges were entirely false; that not a single share of the stock of that company was ever given to any member of Congress, directly or indirectly, by me or any one else, to my knowledge. I now reiterate and reaffirm the statement, with the further declaration that I never gave a share of stock of that or any other company, directly or indirectly, to any member of Congress. These sworn statements of myself and these other gentlemen, made and filed in the same suit, lying side by side in the same record, could have been published with the charges, had it suited the political purposes of the 'New York Sun.' I am willing to set the sworn declaration of any one of these individuals, of the highest character and reputation, against the affidavit of McComb, wherever he is well known, with no fear of an adverse opinion of the integrity of any one of them as against him. And the list of names given by McComb, as indorsed on my letter and published, was written by himself, as he stated when under oath at the hearing in Pennsylvania. He had no authority from me for making any such statement."

Mr. Ames further said that he did not own a share of stock in the Pacific Railroad until 1866; and that "this charge, that a distribution of the stock of the Credit Mobilier in 1868 bribed members of Congress to procure the passage of an act in 1864, is too absurd to be credited." "I may have done wrong," he added, "in my efforts to aid this great national enterprise; if so, I am unconscious of it. I have always regarded it as among the most creditable and patriotic acts of my life."

These extracts from his circular in the autumn before fitly introduce his defense before the House, when he confronted the accusing committee in the presence of that body. The latter was a calm, comprehensive, well-considered statement of the whole matter, and was read with great impressiveness of delivery by the clerk. Narrative, argument, and appeal are welded together in it as in the forge of a large and strong mind. It was, of course, the speech of the session.

He laid before the House a detailed history of the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad, which has already been recited in outline to the reader. He asserted at the outset that "it was universally esteemed not only a measure of sound policy, but a scheme appealing to the patriotism and loyalty of the capitalists of the United States, as the instrument whereby a future separation of the Pacific from the Atlantic States would be rendered forever impossible." The two acts of Congress in 1862 and 1864 are described in all their provisions. The two roads are sketched as running a race across the continent, each building five hundred miles in a single season, "through a desert country, upon a route beset by unparalleled obstacles, and at a necessary cost largely in excess of the most extravagant estimates." President Lincoln is described as "urgent that Congress should not withhold the additional assistance asked," and as "personally advising the officers of the company to go to Congress for such legislation as would assure the success of the enterprise, declaring it a national necessity, and recommending them to apply for additional concessions, ample to place the construction of the road beyond a peradventure."

He recited the history of the different contracts, and their successive failures; showed how a construction company came to take it up; detailed the all but crushing obstacles to its progress; and stated the facts of his first connection with the company, of his contract, and its subsequent assignment. The peculiar state of affairs during 1867 was briefly portrayed. The company, he explained, had no reason to apprehend unfriendly or hostile legislation: every department of the government manifested friendliness; and "the whole country was

loud in demonstrations of approval of the energy and activity which we had infused into the enterprise." "Heads of departments and government officials of every grade, whose duties brought them in contact with the affairs of the company, were clamorous for increased speed of construction, and never lost an opportunity of expressing approval of the work, and urging it forward." He said it had never entered his head that the company would ask for or need additional legislation; and a public man would have been reckless of popular opinion who would have started a crusade against an organization — meaning the Credit Mobilier construction company — "whose praises everywhere filled the press, and were on the lips of the people."

He showed that no legislation affecting the company's interests was asked for three years and a half after the sales of the stock by him; and then it was only in settlement of a purely judicial question, which was designedly sprung upon it in a critical time of the road's fortunes. Describing the difficulties of the work as it proceeded, he said it might well be regarded as the "freak of a madman," if it were not true that it challenged the recognition of a higher motive, namely, "the desire to connect my name conspicuously with the greatest public work of the present century." He comes then to the charge of bribery that had been brought against him. If it were true, he said it must rest on three facts, all of which should be satisfactorily shown in order to justify the extreme measures proposed by the committee: First, the stock must have been sold so much below its true value as to conclusively "presume the expectation of some other pecuniary advantage in addition to the price paid." Second, the stock must have been of a character to create in the purchaser and holder "a corrupt purpose to shape legislation in the interest of the seller." Third, some distinct and specific matter or thing should be alleged and proved, which was to be brought before Congress, and on which the votes of members were sought to be influenced. Each one of these facts, essential to prove bribery, he elaborately and effectively confronted with argu-

ment and disproof. He showed that railroad men of great financial strength declined instantly to take the stock when offered them at par, on account of the enormous risks. That was proved to the committee itself. He demonstrated, from every one of and from all the circumstances of the case, that the ownership of the stock by no means necessarily created in the holder a personal and pecuniary interest in procuring favorable legislation by Congress; when the Oakes Ames contract was completed, "the interest of a holder of Credit Mobilier stock in the Union Pacific Railroad Company, and everything pertaining to it, was at an end." In other words, "the stipulations of that contract and the cash profits derivable therefrom were the end and the beginning, the centre and circumference, the absolute measure of the pecuniary interest of a holder of Credit Mobilier stock in 1868."

He suggested the parallel inquiry, How many railroad presidents and superintendents had given free transportation to members of Congress over their respective roads? The case, he insisted, was not affected by the dimensions and value of the gratuity.

"For the first time in the history of any tribunal," said he, "this body has before it an alleged offender without an offense." He said he stood charged by the committee with the purpose of corrupting certain members of Congress, while it declares them to have been unconscious of his purpose, and does not, either, indicate the subject of the corruption. The purpose to corrupt is inferred, where the effect of corrupting could not possibly be produced, and where no subject for corruption existed.

The question of the jurisdiction of the House was briefly touched, the theory of a "continuing offense" being critically analyzed. He examined the letters written to McComb, to show that it was entirely impossible to infer from them the motives attributed to him by the committee. He showed that he secured his share of the Credit Mobilier stock, of which McComb did not complain till after it began to be valuable, in order to fulfill his contracts of sale to others. "It

would have been a breach of faith in me," he asserted, "to have asked or taken a price in excess of the par value, notwithstanding it may have, in the mean time, advanced." In performing the obligations he had incurred, he said that "no distinction was made between members of Congress and unofficial friends;" he sold the stock to both alike at its par value, in accordance with the agreement. And when McComb objected to his receiving so large an amount, and entered upon a struggle to prevent it, he said he "naturally addressed to him such arguments and considerations as in his [my] judgment would make the deepest impression on his mind." Inasmuch as they both had a common interest in the prosperity and success of the road, he urged upon McComb that he had "so disposed of the stock as to enhance the general strength and influence of the company, for whose welfare his solicitude was not less than my own."

He demanded that his letters to McComb should be "tried by the test of casual and confidential letters, often written hastily, and under circumstances and surroundings entirely different from those in the light of which they are interpreted." They were "framed for a specific purpose and to accomplish a particular end." Their "collateral and incidental bearings were not reflected upon and deliberately weighed." They were "flung off hastily in the instant press of business and the freedom of that personal confidence ordinarily existing between parties jointly concerned in financial schemes or enterprises of public improvement." Few are the men, he declared, who could emerge from such an ordeal completely free from the suspicion of fault.

He declared, therefore, "in the broadest sense of which language is capable," that he had no other views than the ones named, in writing those letters; that never did he imagine for an instant "that from them could be extracted proof of the motive and purpose of corrupting members of Congress;" and that he never entertained such. He alluded to "the insignificant amounts of stock" sold to each member with whom he had dealings; to the proven fact that he never

urged its purchase ; to the entire want of secrecy in all the transactions. He referred in justice to the record of his past life, spent " in the prosecution of business pursuits, honorable to himself and useful to mankind ; " to his reputation, " hitherto without stain : " all which, he protested, should " overcome and outweigh charges solely upheld by the unconsidered and unguarded utterances of confidential business communications."

The profits of construction had been immensely exaggerated. The actual cost of building the road was about seventy million dollars ; the actual profit on this expenditure less than ten million, estimating the securities and stock at their market value when received in payment. For twenty years the ordinary method of building railroads had been through construction companies ; few had been built in any other way. A profit even of fifty per cent. on the Union Pacific construction would not be objected to by any one who thoroughly knew and appreciated the circumstances. So far as he was concerned pecuniarily, he said it would have been better if he had never heard of the Union Pacific Railroad. When it was completed it found itself about six million dollars in debt, the burden of which fell upon individuals, himself among the number. This and the necessity of keeping the road in operation finally culminated in losses in excess of all profit derived by him from the construction of the road.

He showed what immense sums the government had already received from the road by the saving in the cost of transportation. At that time it had been in operation for four years, and no complaint had been heard from any quarter of a single failure to faithfully perform its obligations to the government in any respect. The figures by which he demonstrated the present and future advantage of the road to the government were eloquent with their convincing expression. All this, said he, is solid gain, involving no consequential element, and susceptible of exact computation. " When the rails," he added, " were joined on Promontory Summit, May 10, 1869, the Pacific and the Atlantic, Europe and Asia, the East and the West, pledged them-

selves to that perpetual amity out of which should spring an interchange of the most precious and costly commodities known to traffic; thus assuring a commerce whose tide should ebb to and fro across the continent by this route for ages to come." "A region of boundless natural resources, lately unknown, unexplored, and uninhabited, dominated by savages, has been reclaimed, hundreds of millions added to the wealth of the nation, and the bands of fraternal and commercial union between the East and West strengthened beyond the power of civil discord to sever."

And he most solemnly and impressively concluded his powerful argument in the following words, which those who reverence the character and are grateful for the services of Oakes Ames are fond of frequently repeating: "These, then, are my offenses: that I have risked reputation, fortune, everything, in an enterprise of incalculable benefit to the government, from which the capital of the world shrank; that I have sought to strengthen the work thus rashly undertaken by invoking the charitable judgment of the public upon its obstacles and embarrassments; that I have had friends, some of them in official life, with whom I have been willing to share advantageous opportunities of investments; that I have kept to the truth, through good and evil report, denying nothing, concealing nothing, reserving nothing. Who will say that I alone am to be offered up a sacrifice to appease a public clamor, or expiate the sins of others? Not until such an offering is made will I believe it possible. But if this body shall so order that it can best be purified by the choice of a single victim, I shall accept its mandate; appealing with unfaltering confidence to the impartial verdict of history for that vindication which it is proposed to deny me here."

The conclusion of this speech was the signal for the transmission of congratulatory messages in writing from the galleries of the House and outside to Mr. Ames, accompanied by the most emphatic assurances that he had made a thorough and triumphant vindication of his course. It was an hour for him crowded with emotion. He bore up

through the whole debate, which lasted three days, with the fortitude and self-control that mark conscious integrity when beset with difficulties; but when, in one of the speeches offered in his defense, allusions were made to his honesty, to the struggles in life that had made him strong, to the business integrity that had never received a stain, to the openness of his transactions with members in relation to the stock, and to the steady consistency which stamped his whole testimony before the committee with the indelible marks of truthfulness, his stout heart, that had sustained his nerves throughout the protracted trial without a sign of agitation, suddenly gave way before the flood of feeling that for the moment overwhelmed it, and he buried his face in his hands and wept. The features that had not relaxed, except in smiles of kindness and charity, through the tedious weeks of the trial, were now hidden from the public gaze while the momentary paroxysm of emotion passed over them. The revived memories of his patriotic association with Governor Andrew in council, at the outbreak of the civil war; the fresh recollection of the generous kindness shown him in the shock of business adversity, which the mistaken course of the government itself had precipitated; the reminder of the profound and universal esteem in which he was held by those with whom he had had commercial relations; and the thoughts of the home where he was known only to be treasured in love and affection, broke over the gates of his habitual self-restraint, and made the temporary spectacle eloquent in its appeal for the suspension of passion and panic, that justice and truth might rule the hour.

The effect of the general debate was to make it clear to most minds in the House that a resolution of expulsion would fatally miscarry; and when a member from California moved to substitute for it a resolution of censure, it was carried by a vote of 115 to 110, 15 not voting, and the substitute was adopted by a vote of 182 to 36. Twenty-two members did not vote, while many of those who voted against substitution did so because they thought that there ought not to be passed so much as a resolution of censure. The report of the inves-

tigating committee was presented to the House on the 18th of February, and the vote of censure was passed on the 28th. It was but four days to the expiration of Congress, and the final termination of the public life of the man thus rebuked.

The resolution adopted reads thus : —

“Resolved, That the House absolutely condemns the conduct of Oakes Ames, a member from Massachusetts, in seeking to procure congressional attention to the affairs of a corporation in which he was interested, and whose interest directly depended upon the legislation of Congress, by inducing members of Congress to invest in the stocks of said corporation.”

Mr. Ames occupied a seat on the floor directly in front of the Speaker, where he could be seen by all, when the vote was taken. He sat motionless during the proceedings, his countenance deadly pale, awaiting the result. It was a moment to be likened only to that of destiny. The impassive appearance but poorly concealed the workings of the spirit within. He thought of his past life of industry and honor ; of the unparalleled service he had done for his country, at the urgent solicitation of its prominent men and patriots ; of the record of public censure which was to be his only reward at the hands of a partisan and panic-stricken Congress ; and of the deplorable attempt to take from the legacy he hoped to leave to his posterity and his country its richest element, — honor ; and it would have been an anomaly in the constitution of human character if the force of all these considerations together were not positively appalling. The sustaining consciousness of unfaltering integrity, never questioned up to the very close of his life until it was questioned by the selfish cowardice of mere politicians, only made the suffering of his spirit the more aggravated. The very solitariness of his thoughts, an old man as he was, too, added to the pitiful features of the picture.

And the poignancy of the suffering could not but have been all the greater, instead of being alleviated, from the subsequent eagerness with which those who had just censured him crowded around him, with ex-

tended hands, seeking in a consistent spirit to palliate the gross wrong they had done by confessing the political necessity that forced them to it. At last, then, the true motive of the whole proceeding stood disclosed. It was not, said they, that they condemned *him*, but they feared for themselves the condemnation of their constituents. Ought a verdict thus obtained, and morally worthless by the open admission of those who rendered it, to stand as the permanent record of the opinion of Congress and the country?

What a mockery of justice, what travesty of truth, to thus proclaim to the world, and to record the proclamation as a part of the history of the time, the infamy of a fellow-being whom they voluntarily admitted to be innocent! And there were those among this censuring majority, too, who gave their votes of condemnation with no reference whatever to the merits of the case, but solely with future political expectations in view. It would all appear to be a practical and a heartless illustration of human depravity, in comparison with which the sin charged against their victim is whiteness itself. The analyst of human morals must be puzzled to find the fit expressions in which to clothe his judgment of conduct that so baffles all power of formulation.

The resolution of censure was not an honest and adequate verdict in the case, either, in any sense. It utterly failed to meet the requirements of the situation. It went wide of the original charge. It was insinuating, insincere, and sinister. It contains imputations where findings alone are to be tolerated. Intent is hinted where only fact was the matter for inquiry. The sales of Credit Mobilier stock are condemned on account chiefly of an apprehended wrong that was liable to spring from them. Those who made up this faulty and false judgment could not comprehend that the real motive of the man who sold these small amounts of stock to members of Congress was not to influence legislation, plain as the testimony and the circumstances combined to make that appear, but one of sympathetic kindness mainly, the natural expression of a generous man towards his

accepted friends, the instinctive desire that they should become the sharers, to at least a small extent, of his own prosperity. One who served with him on the railroad committee in 1864 says that when Mr. Ames called upon him afterwards, and asked him to join with himself and others in "lifting" this enterprise out of its embarrassment and try to carry it through, he urged the patriotic consideration of its immense benefit to the nation, and the great credit which those who should be instrumental in its completion would receive from the whole American people. The mercenary motive and the corrupting spirit do not dominate the one who sets off such large considerations by his own deliberate action.

In any review, however hasty, of this ill-starred business, it can escape the attention of no one that Oakes Ames had but one accuser, namely, McComb; that his testimony was not only unsupported, but positively and solemnly contradicted by the one he sought to destroy; that any comparison of the value of their opposing testimony involved a comparison of their characters, which left the scales in a strikingly uneven relation; that McComb's interpretation of the letters written him by Oakes Ames is rendered wholly worthless by the transparency of his motives both in bringing suit and in publishing the letters; that the entire movement, in using the McComb letters at that particular time, was a piece of party strategy, skillfully planned and calculated and maliciously executed; that it was made just when it was for the very purpose of leaving the narrowest possible margin of time in which to explain and clear up the charges brought; that it was expected a fusillade of denials by Congressmen, East and West, would rout the partisan skirmishers who were feeling for future political position along the front of their enemy; that the excited feelings attending a general election wanted but little to kindle them into a flame; and that the casting of this fire-brand aroused a class of coward fears that speedily caused an outbreak of party consternation. From that time to the close of the canvass, it was but the prelude to the unparalleled scenes in the investigating committee-room and on the floor of Congress.

The remarkable feature of the case was that in no quarter was Oakes Ames less esteemed than before, and that he was regarded more highly than ever where he was known. It was so singular a fact as to be almost phenomenal in human experience that the real truth of the whole matter would never have been known but for his intrepid telling of it; the only faltering, if such it can be called, which he manifested being shown in order to screen others from the effect of their own falsehoods or prevarications. But when he saw that they not only denied, but defied, he hesitated no longer in giving up what he would have preferred to withhold for their sake, and disclosed the entire transaction to its bottom detail. After all, the condemnation of Oakes Ames by Congress could never have been compassed except by the use of his own testimony. It was in consequence of telling the plain truth, and the whole of it, that he received the public censure of Congress, of those who denied what he affirmed. Those whom he exposed came off unscathed, while Congress likewise refused to believe them. By accepting his testimony as the truth and using it for his condemnation, Congress cleared those who contradicted it, and censured him. If it was to give his testimony the preference, the simplest form of logic would lead to the one conclusion that they should have been equally condemned with him in the first place, and doubly condemned for venturing to deny the truth as Congress saw and accepted it.

There is sufficient unreason in this legislative episode to amount to stultification. Never has there been a similar scene recorded in our history. And nothing contained in it all is justified by the passing years; nothing remains of its memories to furnish the slightest real satisfaction; nothing appeals to the readers of our political history at that time to excite either gratification or pride, but the undeviating devotion to the truth which exalts the name of Oakes Ames to the highest level as an unpretending teacher of public morals. The path he took through that trackless bog, in the surrounding darkness, is luminous to-day. The lesson impressed by the whole trial is the permanent

supremacy of honesty of character. It was not Oakes Ames who went down before that storm of passionate fear, but those who dared to deny what Oakes Ames affirmed. It was he who was censured ; it was they who were condemned.

He left the scene of his triumphs and his suffering at the end of the session, never to return. The hurt he had received from thankless hands lacerated his heart. The native ruggedness of his exterior may have led those who administered it to believe that he came off harmless from the desperate political game they had been playing, using him for a pawn ; but they evidently knew little of the deep and tender feeling which that exterior inclosed, — the deeper and tenderer because of its undemonstrative habit before men.

His neighbors and townsmen at his Easton home determined to testify their abiding faith in his honor and their just pride in his fame, though a score of Congresses had done their best to becloud the one and rob him of the other. They therefore arranged to give him a sincere welcome home on his arrival. It was originally intended that it should be a strictly local affair ; but his friends throughout the Second District broke over all such restraints, and joined heartily in the demonstration. The exercises included a public reception in the school-house, given by the Ames family to the town, and a few appropriate speeches ; the one which of course excited the chief interest being that of the recipient himself of these tokens of popular confidence. In that brief response he said, —

“ I have, as you are aware, been the principal subject of abuse for the past six months. The press of the country has been full of what is called the Credit Mobilier scandal. The whole offense, if offense it can be called, is in selling sixteen thousand dollars of stock to eleven members of Congress, at the same price I paid for it, and at the same price I sold the stock to others ; and if the parties purchasing the stock had simply told the truth, and said they had a right to purchase it, that would have been the end of it. But from the fact of their denial, the public suspected there must be something criminal in the transaction ; and to find out what the crime was, Congress appointed a commit-

tee to inquire if Oakes Ames had bribed any member of Congress. The result was the appointment of the notorious Poland committee. That committee was engaged nearly three months, and the result of all its labors was to badly damage the character of some men high in office for truth and veracity. But the object of the committee, to see if Oakes Ames bribed any member, was admitted 'not proven;' but that committee made the wonderful discovery that I was guilty in selling stock for less than it was worth, but the parties taking the stock and keeping it were very innocent; and that I had the extraordinary ability to give men a bribe without their knowing it, and to do they did not know what. That's the sum and substance of the Credit Mobilier, which has kept the country in a state of excitement for the past six months."

His speech was received with the hearty applause which told of the perfect accord of listeners and speaker, and was immediately followed by the familiar strains of "Home, sweet Home," by the band. It was a joyous occasion for the neighbors and friends of Oakes Ames, who felt that they had got him back among themselves once more, where he was to stay. To him it must have been one of the most satisfactory scenes of his long life; even more so, when he searched the corners of his heart, than the driving of the golden spike that joined the Union and Central Pacific Railroads in a single line across the desert and the mountains.

To a friend in Boston, not long afterwards, who had sought to rally him on his congressional experience somewhat, he remarked, "I have got home among my friends. They know me, and I mean to stay." His stay, however, was lamentably brief. The tremendous strain on all his powers which the building of the Pacific Railroad had wrought was more than doubled by the wholly unexpected experience of the past winter, and the two together undermined the stock of strength that remained after so prolonged and severe exertion. Without doubt, he would have confessed that the construction of the road itself had not cost him one half as much of his actual life, its substance and its vigor, as the struggle of a winter with an insensate Congress had done.

A number of the merchants and business men of Boston were making preparations to offer him a complimentary dinner, at which suitable public expression would have been made of the high esteem and unshaken confidence in which he was held, as well as of the profound admiration felt for the consummate achievement with which his name was always to be associated. But their intention was forestalled by the event that followed with so brief a warning.

He was stricken with paralysis, complicated with pneumonia, on Monday, the fifth day of May, and after lingering until the following Thursday was released from all earthly burdens and responsibilities forever. His end was wholly peaceful. Surrounded by his family, whom he individually recognized up to the closing day of his existence, he passed quietly from the scene of his activities to enter on those not yet disclosed to human vision. He died, as he would have wished to die, at home, his family about his bedside, in an atmosphere that breathed only affection. All felt that he had at last found rest; that his great and kindly heart was no more to be disturbed by the contentions of ingratitude and the treachery of untruth.

The tidings of his unexpected death flew to all parts of the country with electric speed, causing an outpouring of spontaneous regrets everywhere at his departure as a serious national loss. His eminent qualities as an American citizen were universally conceded. His inestimable services to the nation were confessed. All hearts manifested the sorrow they so profoundly felt. The same journals that had, for partisan reasons, seen fit to assail him with an unceasing stream of vituperation ceased from their accustomed strain, and joined with the rest in paying tribute to his great character. The magical stroke of death seemed to be necessary to silence the uproar of passion which party pursuits had shamelessly evoked. In that dread presence the tongues of thoughtless calumny were hushed. An appeal had been most unexpectedly taken from weak human judgment to that which searches every heart.

He died on the eighth day of May, 1873, in the late evening, and

was buried from his home, in the same ground where the remains of his ancestors repose, on Sunday, May 11th. The funeral services drew a large concourse of people, numbering fully three thousand, among whom were the leading citizens of the State and conspicuous representatives of every department of life. The scene could not fail to impress one profoundly with a sense of the silent power of his name and character. The exercises were simple, as befitted the one over whose clay they were held. The address of the ministering clergyman, Rev. Rush R. Shippen, was strikingly appreciative and beautifully appropriate, conveying to the minds of the great collection of listeners such an estimate and summary of the worth of the man whom all had come to honor, though departed, as would remain a permanent record in their memories.

"He was true to the great questions of the time," remarked the reverend speaker, "and was through life a loyal advocate and an adherent of the cause of temperance and freedom. With ample means for luxury, preserving a Puritan simplicity in his home and habit of life, and by precept as well as by example leading the way from extravagances of the hour that tempt so many beyond their means, and preserving that republican and majestic simplicity of the older generations, he met men on the level of simple manhood; never cowering to the lofty, and never despising the lowly. With no aristocratic ways of speech or manner that repelled the common man, but meeting all men with a simple justice, taking them as they were, his distinguishing characteristic was his massive mould and stature, that made him a mighty worker in the world's affairs."

"Friends are more sensitive," said he, in closing, "to the mistakes of friends than any outsiders can be, but they only ask that the man shall be taken in the largeness of his purpose and the largeness of the services which he has rendered. When we are close to a mountain, we see sometimes only the small seams and fissures on its surface; but when we recede, we see it in the true perspective, and can raise our eyes to its summit; and then we see it in its grander and more

majestic proportions. I say solemnly to-day that when the clamor of the hour has passed the American people will better recognize the grandeur of his services to them; and, for myself, I anticipate that verdict of the coming time. When I remember how the wealth and the resources and the civilization of America have been indebted to him, I willingly and gladly pay, this day, my tribute of gratitude to his memory."

A meeting of the Directors of the Union Pacific Railroad Company was held in Boston on the 25th of June, 1873, at which the accompanying resolution was unanimously adopted: —

"*Resolved*, That intelligence of the death of Hon. Oakes Ames, a member of this Board since 1870, has been received by us with profound sorrow, and we desire to express and put on record our high estimate of his strong, manly character, and our deep sense of his especial usefulness to this corporation. We esteemed him for his far-sighted enterprise, resolution, patience, cheerfulness, and sterling integrity. His interest in the Union Pacific Railroad commenced long ago, and his good offices to the company can hardly be overestimated. He had faith when all was doubt; courage when courage was needed; resources when others had none. In the darkest period of war and financial distrust his indomitable spirit urged forward the building of this road and sustained its credit. In its behalf he carried great burdens of care and debt. Now that all those cares have ended, the popular voice entitles him 'Builder of the Union Pacific Railroad.' We sincerely mourn the loss of a friend so true, an associate so trustworthy, and a citizen so valuable to his State and the nation."

At a meeting of the stockholders of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, held in Boston on the 10th of March, 1875, the following resolution was unanimously passed: —

"*Resolved*, That in honor of the memory of Oakes Ames, and in recognition of his services in the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad, to



Forbes Albertype—Boston.

MONUMENT
IN MEMORY OF OAKES AMES AND OLIVER AMES,

Erected by the Union Pacific Railway Company at Sherman, Wyoming Territory,—the highest point reached by its railroad. Base, 60 feet square. Height, 60 feet. Summit, 8,350 feet above level of the sea.

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which he devoted his means and his best energies with a courage, fidelity, and integrity unsurpassed in the history of railroad construction, the Directors are requested to take measures, in coöperation with such friends as may desire to contribute, for the erection, at some point on the line of the road, of a suitable and permanent monument."

Oakes Ames was one of the characteristic products of New England, and, bred among his native surroundings, could not have been other than he was. A man of primitively simple habits; a man of deeds rather than words; a man of and with the people; ambitious without accompanying egotism; frank and fearless; rugged yet kind; of plain personal address that might be thought homely; whose written expressions were pithy, condensed, and forcible with meaning; with no suspicion of exclusiveness about him; the last marked representative of the sturdy Puritan race; patient as the laboring ox under his self-imposed burdens; one who radically believed in the dignity as he did in the abiding worth of labor, he built up his fame as he did his fortune, on the broad base of useful service. His friendships were tenacious and strong; his affections were deep and warm; and under a rugged exterior he carried the heart of a child.

It is not easy to speak even in measured terms of the unparalleled achievement of his life, without seeming to employ the phraseology of exaggeration. So vast a conception it is rarely given to a single human being to carry alone. The combining of the numerous and powerful forces necessary to its successful execution of itself indicates the operating presence of a man possessed of the largest powers in a state of perfect discipline. Nothing less than an ambition inspired by exalted patriotism could have defied, singly and collectively, the difficulties that multiplied as the work advanced. No recital of them in their minutest details could place the reader of them in the full possession of their hostile significance. Ordinary men they would have led to believe that the undertaking had been prohibited by both man and nature; him they only stimulated to grander endeavor, as if he actually gloried in proving the strength of his purpose in a contest

from which others retreated at the outset. That it is not too much to say of Oakes Ames that *he* was the builder of the Union Pacific may be shown by simply withdrawing his name from the company of his associates ; it will at once be seen who it was that imparted to them the courage, who aroused in them the energy, and who steadily held them up to the high level of persistency by which all was at last achieved.

What this road to the Pacific means for the country is not to be cast in even partial estimate at the present time. As years and a succession of generations are needed to furnish the proper perspective to the magnitude of the enterprise, so are they also necessary to any approximate statement of its actual import and value. The latter will go on increasing in a ratio which cannot be fixed. The present saving to the government in the item of transportation, great as it is, will appear trivial by the side of the reclamation of the trackless desert to the footsteps of civilization, the planting of smiling towns and cities in solitary wastes, the expansion of productive human industries into the unbroken silence of nature, the creation of uncounted communities of happy homes, and the indissoluble union of the crowded populations of opposite shores. It needs the prophetic eye to disclose all the varied fruits of this great enterprise, which awaited only the coming of the chosen man. Unquestionably, he saw in imagination a large part of this grand living panorama, and he longed to associate his name for all coming time with the achievement that was to make it wholly reality. He must have seen farther than ambition alone allowed him. He could not have been satisfied with the view which any hopes of mere profit held up before him. He looked into the distant future, and beheld busy generations peopling the wilds he had penetrated as their pioneer. And his heart must have dilated with a satisfaction too deep for speech at the thought of what his fellow-men would ever gratefully remember that he had done.

In an encomium of him delivered in the House of Representatives, Senator Dawes, then a Representative, used the following language :

"I have a colleague who has adorned his calling through a long life of industry; who has carried greater loads upon his shoulders, and worked out greater problems in the development of the resources of this country, than any man connected with any material interest or enterprise in the whole United States."

"A grateful nation will yet rear his monument; and its inscription will be, **THE BUILDER OF THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.**"

Does not Massachusetts, among whose first citizens he will ever rank, and on whose reputation for far-reaching purpose and courageous enterprise he has conferred imperishable lustre, owe it to herself to procure the effacement of the stigma which rests on her name as well as his own, and the substitution in its place of a public recognition of services which were of the first order of practical patriotism?

Does not the country, at length possessed of the marvelous achievement which was mainly the fruit of his brain, now realize that the reward for such services is not cowardly rebuke, but proud acknowledgment and admiring appreciation?



Forbes Albertype—Boston.

OAKES AMES MEMORIAL HALL,
NORTH EASTON, MASS.

DEDICATION OF THE OAKES AMES MEMORIAL HALL.

To the filial devotion of the sons of the late Oakes Ames is due the erection of the visible testimonial to their honored father's memory, which stands in bold relief upon its base of solid rock in North Easton. It contains, in the public uses for which it was constructed, the living germ which will secure for its expression the perpetuity to which all architectural effects are directed. A monument to the First Citizen of the town, it stands in the daily sight of his fellow-citizens, and is virtually open at all times for their occupancy and service. Its walls will, so long as they stand, be clothed with recollections of the sterling virtues of his simple but strong character.

The structure at once impresses the eye of the beholder with a sense of grandeur and beauty in harmonious combination. It is most significantly placed on the edge of a ledge of native rock, which presents on one side a bold and rugged face, and stands at a high elevation above the road and but a little distance from it. So commanding is the natural position and so imposing is the structure, it has been well compared in its external effect to an ancient castle. An octagonal tower rises at the corner of the mass of rock, which is the most precipitous. The edifice exposes its side to the road, and, excluding the tower elevation, is ninety-six and one third feet in length. For its entire length it is ornamented with an arcade, supported by five arches. The structure above this arcade is pierced for windows, which

admit light to the main hall, and a roof with a steep pitch, covered with red tiles, completes the description of the outline of the edifice.

The material used in the construction is the native granite of North Easton, pinkish-gray in color, which is employed in the first story, the second being finished in handsome brick. The trimmings, which are generous, are of brown stone. The arches of the arcade are supported by columns, with carved capitals. Over the front dormer-window, wreathed with sculptured foliage, appears a monogram formed of the letters "O. A.," and about the frieze which ornaments the beautiful tower with its elaborate carving are to be distinguished the twelve signs of the zodiac.

Short and easy flights of broad steps of brown stone and granite offer an inviting ascent to the Hall, finished at their outer edges with brown stone curves. The entrance is by the arcade, which has a width of twelve feet, and within which is inscribed on a tablet of stone these words: "This building was erected in memory of Oakes Ames by his children." Through the hall-way the passage on the left is into a hall thirty-two feet by eleven, or directly forward into a smaller room. The stairs to the upper hall are placed in the tower, and likewise conduct to the roof hall, which is devoted to Masonic uses. The main hall is on the second story, and is fifty-nine feet in length, and forty-seven feet in width, and twenty feet in height. The stage, which is not included in the dimensions of the main hall, measures twenty-six feet by eighteen. The windows are of stained and plain glass, four on either side of the hall. The inner walls are in harmonious coloring, producing a bright, cheerful, and thoroughly agreeable effect. The cost of this noble edifice was sixty thousand dollars, and its construction throughout proceeded without regard to the amount of expenditure under the original plan of the architect.

The public dedication of this building was finally appointed for November 17, 1881, and a large number of prominent and distinguished men, citizens of other States as well as of Massachusetts, were invited to be present and participate in the ceremonies. The occasion

thus became a memorable one in a larger than a strictly local sense. The absent would be more easily numbered than those who were present. The gathering was a notable one for Massachusetts. Between four and five hundred men, chiefly public men and men of distinction, came down to North Easton from Boston in a special train, including a large representation of the Legislature of the State, which had made an early adjournment in order to give members an opportunity to be present, among whom were the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. There were also present the Governor of the State, members of Congress from the different districts, the city officials of Boston, railroad men, merchants, bankers, members of the legal and clerical professions, and, in fact, the representatives of every leading business, profession, and calling. There were present, too, the men who had been most closely associated with the late Oakes Ames in his business enterprises, whose names are known in connection with the same from one end of the country to the other.

The dedication involved the formal presentation of the edifice to the town of Easton, for its public use forever. Within its walls the citizens were thus chartered to hold their public meetings for deliberating on their common interests and welfare ; to assemble for purposes of intellectual enjoyment and cultivated recreation ; and, on all necessary occasions, to utter the town sentiments and opinions, with the authority of an independent civil organization.

The towns-people lined the road from the railroad station to the Hall, to welcome with respectful silence the arrival of the distinguished men who had come to do honor to the memory of their famous fellow-citizen. There was no attempt to move in procession to the Hall, but the visitors naturally formed an unbroken line, and at once repaired to the scene of the day's exercises.

These were begun by Mr. A. A. Gilmore, the chairman of the day, by requesting Rev. William L. Chaffin, of North Easton, to offer prayer, which he did as follows : —

"O God, our Heavenly Father, may we not be unmindful that now, as always, we are in thy most holy presence ; and may the thought that Thou art with us here sanctify our purpose and feeling, so that we may engage in this service in the right spirit ; so that whatever we do may be done as unto the Lord. And may all the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight.

"We praise thee, O God, with thankful hearts that Thou hast bound us together by strong and enduring ties of love and friendship, which time and death cannot destroy, and which, because Thou art, and because Thou hast created them, are the surest prophecy of our immortality. We praise Thee that we are permitted to come together here this day, animated by a common sentiment ; not to pay homage to wealth, or power, or worldly success, but to unite in a service of honored and affectionate remembrance of the man in whose name this building, the tribute of a devoted filial love, has been erected. May his image be fresh in our recollection, so that he may seem to be with us, looking into our faces, clasping our hands with warm greetings of friendship, and speaking words of cordial and equal good-will to all, of whatever station and condition. If it is permitted those who have died but who live evermore, O God, with Thee, to look down upon the scenes they once loved in this world, we rejoice that his heart is made glad by this great gathering of his friends who meet here in his honor to-day.

"May their respect and love, the respect and love of so many of those who knew him best, do something to right the grievous wrong of the past ; and now that the passions and fears and sordid self-interests of that time are silenced, do Thou, O God, dispose the minds of men to candor and justice.

"Most graciously, O God, be present with us and bless us in our service this afternoon. Wilt Thou bless the filial love that prompted this fitting memorial. Wilt Thou bless this gift which for years and generations to come will be a means of real benefit and pleasure to people here ; and, as they gather in this place, may there come to them from time to time tender thoughts of him in whose honor these walls have been upraised.

"O God, wilt Thou bless us all. Bless us now, and bless us forevermore. Amen."

The chairman then said, "Ladies and gentlemen, to me is as-

signed the delightful privilege of bidding you welcome to the village of North Easton, the home for more than half a century of Oliver Ames, senior, and the life-long residence of his sons, Oakes Ames and Oliver Ames, where they were all and always honored, respected, and loved. We are assembled here to-day to dedicate to the memory of Oakes Ames this edifice, the gift of his sons to the town of Easton, and I now have the pleasure of introducing to you one of those sons, our fellow-townsmen and public-spirited citizen, the Honorable Oliver Ames."

As Mr. Ames came forward, he was greeted with hearty and long-continued applause. He addressed the assembly in the following words: —

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — The building in which we are assembled is erected in honor of our father, the late Oakes Ames, to stand as a monument to his public services and to his private worth. This, the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall, we dedicate to-day to the use and for the benefit of the people of Easton. To you," — addressing Mr. Lewis H. Smith, chairman of the Board of Trustees, — "the trustees appointed to receive and care for the building, we now present the keys, trusting that the building will prove a source of pleasure and convenience to the good people of the town." (Loud applause.)

Mr. Smith responded as follows for the trustees: "The trustees, to whose charge you have entrusted this Memorial Hall, accept your noble and generous gift in behalf of the town of Easton. We offer to you our most sincere and hearty thanks. We shall highly prize this building for its own sake, for the new beauty it gives the town, and for the valuable uses it will serve. But we shall prize it more highly yet because it is a worthy memorial of a man whom we all delight to honor, — your beloved father and our fellow-townsmen, the HONORABLE OAKES AMES." (Applause.)

The band enlivened the exercises with a musical performance, after which the chairman called for the reading of the letters received from a number of distinguished public men and business associates of the

late Oakes Ames, which service was performed by Hon. Charles W. Slack, of Boston. He prefaced the reading with the accompanying remarks : —

“ My humble share in this happy occasion arises from the fact that, at the request of the sons of our honored and deceased friend, I conducted a portion of the correspondence which led to this delightful gathering to-day. I have to say that there were received some sixty or seventy letters in response by eminent men all over the country ; and although I do not intend to read anything like even a fair proportion of these letters, they all breathe the same generous and appreciative estimate of the distinguished man who has passed away, and who hereafter is to be remembered in this elegant hall.”

Extracts from a number of these letters will be found at the close of the present narrative.

The chairman, after the reading, came forward, and introduced to the company his Excellency, Governor Long, as “ the Governor and Governor-elect by a large majority,” who was received with the heartiest demonstrations of satisfaction. The Governor spoke in the following strain : —

“ What a tender New England feeling is in the legend, engraved in letters of stone, which met our eyes as we entered these doors ! ‘ This building was erected in memory of Oakes Ames by his children.’ One hardly knows whether such a splendid edifice reflects more credit upon the father to whose memory and in honor of whose great enterprise and public spirit it has been reared, or upon the sons who have exhibited such generous measure of filial love and piety. They have done well also to invite to a share in their tribute those who represent the Commonwealth, the federal government, the town, and so many departments of public industry, and who, by their presence here in this large, intelligent, and distinguished gathering, pay almost a more striking tribute to the brave spirit who has gone.

“ Oakes Ames sat in the council of John A. Andrew, and helped him fight the good fight for freedom. Transferred to the national councils, it was the power of his will and genius that conquered the snows and peaks of the Rocky Mountains, and put an iron girdle round about the American continent in

forty minutes. It was a gigantic work, which hardly any other hand was strong enough to undertake, and to which to-day no man who knew him doubts that he brought also the patriotic purpose of binding closer the Union, the peril of which he had just seen, and putting it still more rapidly forward on the road of its mighty development. And here, too, at home, behold these memorials of his benevolence which stand all around us in this his native town, bequeathed by him to his sons in that spirit of enterprise which is their richest and best inheritance, and consummated by them in these comfortable homes of labor and this magnificent town hall, as also by his brother Oliver — *par nobile fratrum* — and that brother's family in this graceful church and public library; all these buildings standing together as close, and devoted as truly to the public good, as the generous families whose public spirit has erected them. How significant! What a compendium of American history are these wondrous American lives! — the early struggles; the common-school education; the apprenticeship to an humble trade; the blacksmith's swinging arm; the best pride of New England blood and ancestry; the institution of special lines of manufacture and art; their steady enlargement; the outgrowth then of larger purposes; the growing interest in the public weal and progress; the respect won from fellow-citizens; the elevation to high place and opportunity; the ultimate conquering of fortune; and the crowning achievement of success and a name. It is a tribute, as are this occasion and building, not to American wealth, but to American worth and American growth.

“Yet let me turn again and congratulate the sons who, mindful at once of good taste and of utility, have paid this tribute of their filial affection and gratitude to the father, whom none could know as they knew him, and whose heart, if ever the sorrows which fall on all weighed it down, found life worth living in their love and in a loyalty which, surviving the grave, holds no trust so sacred as the honor of his good name, — the father's memory, — the memory of him who, remembering his own boyhood, determined that ours should lack no help that he could give it; who stood to our youth the very soul of honor and nobility; who led us by the hand; who taught us our first lessons; whose heart, as now so well we know, yearned toward us with so much hope and pride and longing; the greeting smile of whose face and the clasp of whose hand come back to us in dreams; and whom death

even takes not from us, but only the more clearly reveals to us as the truest friend we ever knew ! We cannot all erect to a father's memory such a monument as this. With most of us it is a modest headstone, and the green turf wet with our tears. But we can all share in the feelings that have given birth to this magnificent memorial : not a cumbrous and curious obelisk, fantastically cut with characters that time shall shatter and future ages be unable to decipher ; not a cold, forbidding mausoleum, suggestive of death and decay, and rotting into the earth ; not a monumental arch, to which the idle creeping ivy clings, and through which howl the barren winds, but a great hall, warm with life and activity, for the meeting of townsmen and free citizens, where the public interest, which so stirred the heart of Oakes Ames, shall have voice ; where the welfare of the people shall be promoted ; where thrifty industry shall send its representatives ; where refining amusements shall delight them ; where orators shall speak, and song and music swell ; and where he and his sons shall still live for years to come in the hearts of the people of their native town, and in the larger and more enlightened life to which his and their works have so largely contributed." [Applause.]

After the applause with which the speech of Governor Long was received had subsided, the chairman introduced to the assembly "one of the illustrious sons of Massachusetts, to whom has been confided many trusts, both State and National, all of which he has discharged with conspicuous fidelity and ability, Honorable George S. Boutwell." He was received with very warm demonstrations of welcome, and proceeded to speak as follows : —

"I think myself fortunate, Mr. President, and ladies and gentlemen, that for a period of about twenty years I enjoyed, first the acquaintance, and then the friendship, of Mr. Oakes Ames. And again I think myself fortunate that now, after several years more have passed since the day of his death, I am able to join with his family, his townsmen, the chief magistrate and principal officers of the Commonwealth that he always venerated, and for a time represented, in that just tribute to his character, his service, and his memory which, for a moment, was denied him by an excited and, in some respects, misdirected public opinion.

"He was born to an inheritance of active business. He accepted its duties

and administered its trusts with a manly fidelity and comprehensive intelligence which advanced yet higher the already honorable name of his family.

“He came to active life when great fortunes were less frequent than they now are, but associated with his brother, Mr. Oliver Ames, almost equally well known. [Applause.] His house acquired vast wealth for the time, and established a credit whose limits were not marked by the boundaries of States. In the use of that wealth he was liberal and wise in private and public charities and contributions, and generous to excess in the aids he extended to business associates and acquaintances. He was tolerant of hostility, forgetful of injuries, and persistent in his friendships. Of men of wealth and capacity for action he was among the first, and conspicuously he was the foremost in measuring the necessity and in comprehending the feasibility of establishing railway communication between the valley of the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean. Whatever may be said of the generous endowment made by the government in aid of that undertaking, whatever credit may be accorded to his associates, — and much credit is justly due to them, — there will yet remain the fact that until Mr. Ames assumed responsibility there were no clear indications that the work would be completed. [Applause.] Upon his own broad shoulders he laid the weight of that vast enterprise, and he assumed, and for months and years he carried, responsibilities and met obligations altogether beyond the capacity of ordinary men. The magnitude of the undertaking may be measured and the honor of success in it may be estimated by the circumstance that, since Mr. Ames and his associates showed the way to the Pacific Ocean, corporations and men plethoric with superfluous wealth have struggled through long and weary years to overcome the obstacles they found in their path.

“No other public measure, advanced and completed by private enterprise and capital, has contributed as much to the prosperity of the United States as the construction of the railway to the Pacific Ocean. Our population has thereby been increased by immigration, the area of agriculture extended, towns and cities created on both sides of the continent, and the mountain barrier to harmony and union broken down. So essentially did Mr. Ames contribute to these results that their history cannot be written without honorable mention of his name.” [Applause.]

“I am now about to introduce to you,” observed the chairman, in

continuation of the exercises, "a gentleman who, like 'The Atlantic Monthly,' is 'devoted to literature, art, science, and politics,' and I also understand that he knows a little of theology, — Rev. Edward Everett Hale."

The announcement was greeted with an emphasis of approbation, and Rev. Mr. Hale came forward, and responded in the following remarks: —

"It seems to me, Mr. President, that perhaps the fittest thing I can say will be to speak of a single detail of his life, — the detail in which, as it happened, I made his personal acquaintance. But when I look at the young men whom I see at the other side of the room, men whose hair is not as gray as those I see in front of me, I am well aware that I speak of a condition of things and a time which to these young men may seem unintelligible. I knew him first as I knew his brother, in the direction of the Emigrant Aid Company, — a company formed to direct the movement of New Englanders to Kansas. Generally, with us, emigration is left to take care of itself. This company, therefore, was one of the most remarkable exceptions to the whole policy of this country. It really led to the beginning of the civil war, and, as I believe, led to the victory in that war. But people did not think so small of it then, young men, as we do now. At the moment when the territory west of Missouri was thrown open to emigration, it was a wonder here what devil of devils opened up the subject of the national cause of slavery again, when it had been set at peace so entirely in the Southern interest. The hands of the North were tied, they were chained, when Kansas and Nebraska were all of a sudden thrown open to emigration, Northern or Southern. We know now what threw open Kansas. It was the selfishness of a few hundred planters in Western Missouri, but we did not know it then. Those men who ruled the country, Jefferson Davis and the rest, could never understand, they did not understand until the day when war began, why rich men like Oakes Ames and Oliver Ames, like Martin Brimmer and Amos Lawrence and William Claflin, and like gentlemen who are sitting here around me, men far off in Eastern Massachusetts, in comfortable life, should care whether there was a 'nigger' more or less in Kansas or in Nebraska. It was a thing you never could drive into their heads that we had any concern in that matter.

"All through that country this little Emigrant Aid Company, in which Mr. Ames was a Director, was represented as a gigantic corporation, with five millions of capital. This was at a time when it would have been found difficult to raise even five dollars it needed for its expenditure, if it had not been for such men as he, willing to draw his checks to the treasurer's order. [Applause.] Through all that time there was this mystery of mysteries, why anybody here should interest himself about this matter; not merely why those young men of Northern blood could go to distant Kansas to die in the battles of freedom, but why there was a force behind them here that sent them upon their way. Well, sir, you and I know why it was, for we know what was the secret of this good, true, pure man's life.

"I am told, every now and then, as one man dies and another, that that man is the last of the Puritans. I am glad to say I do not think he was the last of the Puritans. I hope I am looking at a good many young Puritans standing round the hall, who know that the first thing in life is to keep their bodies pure, and that it is only the pure in heart who see God. [Applause.] But it is perfectly true that Oakes Ames was one of those men. [Applause.]

"This great name of Ames was not a name to be remembered for oratory only. It was not to go down to posterity with the remembrance alone of Fisher Ames, the kinsman of our friends, and of that matchless eloquence of his in the hall of Congress,—an eloquence so great, you know, that his associates adjourned over one night because they knew they were under the fascination of the man, and they were afraid to vote until they had slept upon his speech. It was not to go down to posterity connected with the great life work of any who preceded him; but the name of Ames was forever to be associated with that patriotism which acts for the right wherever the right has a field or a purpose. It was that which brought him into what men called a hopeless cause. What was a little corporation handling \$30,000 to do against the matchless organization which upheld slave labor and slave-holding industry through the South? It had the power of omnipotence; that was all. [Applause.] It had the power of eternal right; that was all. It had such men as he, who believed in the right, first, second, last, and always. It had in him one of the Puritans to back it. God be praised, it had more than one.

"I say it was in that dark hour that I made this man's acquaintance first, and you who hear me know that the disposition he showed then, the willingness to

spend fortune, to spend time, to spend health, and to give life at last, to carry forward what was right, was the leading element of his character. It ran all the way through his life. Yes, he knew how to spend money as well as any man. He knew what could be secured with money as well as any man, but always there was the question, 'What can I do with it?' 'Why has God given it to me?' 'What is the great moral purpose which can be advanced in this or that expenditure?'

"Since these invitations were extended to us, and I knew we were to have the good fortune of being here together to-day, naturally my mind has run back to many interviews with him upon matters in which he was always curiously interested. These things, as your Excellency knows, were apt to be intertwined with the subject of education everywhere. It was not simply this town of Easton that he wanted to have well provided with schools, but the education of the whole country was a matter very near to his heart, and he took broad and large views of the method of that education. He was used always to converse about it, and you found him acquainted with the subject in details where you had not expected it. I have fancied there was something in the very nature of the business which he followed, bringing him into relation with working men of all parts of the country, as some men of New England are not brought, which gave him a broader view of the necessities of the country than all New England men of business habitually entertain. Of this I am quite sure: that while he always desired to promote such local interests as these which make him remembered at North Easton, his large-heartedness did not stop here, nor with this town, or this county, or this Massachusetts. His interest extended to the whole United States of America, which he was determined to bind together, and make strong and enduring forever. [Applause.]

"Among the sarcasms of a dark day, which has been alluded to, when men who were in all regards his inferiors were bent on destroying his reputation, one casual phrase of his was cited with many a bitter sneer, and in the cruel levity of defamation it became a sort of proverb. It was said that he said of some expenditure of money of his own that he 'placed it where it would do most good.' [Applause.] I dare say he said that. It would be quite like him to say that. I could not but think to-day, as I came down here in the train, that, whether it was spoken in jest or in earnest, any man might be proud to have spoken it, unconsciously, spontaneously,

as a thing of course. I wish to God, sir, that it might become a sacred proverb in our lives. Your Excellency knows, I think, that I shall leave no fortune to my children. I shall leave to them a memory of poor abilities, but of certain gifts that God has given me (for God has given certain gifts to all of us). And certainly I shall ask nothing better than to have carved upon the slate stone above my head, 'Such gifts as God gave him he placed where they could do the most good.' [Applause.] That is the Puritan's wish and it should be the Puritan's epitaph.

"As for these various currents of opinion which have been alluded to, I am afraid too much has been said of them already. This is but the drift seaweed that floats here and there upon the current. A man is affected by it, unconsciously perhaps, if he is fool enough to read the newspapers; the chatter of the gulls above our heads, which are now diving for a fish, now fighting for a bit of cork upon the water, and always undertake to teach us, in language which is too apt to be unintelligible, what they think of virtue and truth and honesty.

"I see that bit of history so often that I take from it but one lesson; for, as it happens, I pass the weeks of summer at the seashore near Point Judith. We have a wide outlook over the sea there, but there, as in the rest of life, it often happens that a dense fog settles down over sea and shore, and a man sees nothing. He must walk by faith. Nay, it will happen that a southerly storm shall set in and all the stores of heaven shall be unlocked, the winds shall tear up the waves and the waves shall tear up the sands, so that even the curves of the beaches shall be altered, and the breaches in them by which the proud waters make their way to the sea. But after such a commotion of the elements, the wind shall come round into the northwest, and the sky shall be clear blue without a cloud, and the eye can pierce into the infinite. You walk down upon the beach to find the piles of seaweed which were flung upon it by the gale, to find that those howling gulls are blown off you know not where. The channels in the sand are changed. The currents of the water are changed, but, Mr. President, there is one thing which is not changed. There is one rock, and that is always there. [Applause.]

"Our friend, the architect of this building, whose deserved praises are on every lip to-day, has fully understood the history of the life which this hall is to commemorate, and has fitly expressed it in visible symbol. As we entered by that grand stairway, buttressed as it is on the eternal primitive rock, it was impossible not to think of the great inscription which is the motto of

our friend's life, and which for all such lives was written down more than eighteen hundred years ago. It was of such men as he, and such a life as his, that it was written, 'The rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.' Those words are the inscription for this hall." [Applause.]

"There is but about an hour left for the remaining exercises," said the chairman, "before the train leaves. I have seven gentlemen on my list of speakers, besides some others I would be glad to call upon; and in order to enable those seven to remodel their speeches and cut them down a little, we will call upon the band to play a few minutes." [Laughter and applause.]

An excellent selection formed the ready response of the band, at the end of which the chairman continued as follows:—

"The next gentleman whom I shall introduce to you is one who enjoys the privilege of having free passes over all the railroads of the Commonwealth, which is a source of great joy to those who get them, and of corresponding disgruntlement to those who fail,— Judge Thomas Russell."

That gentleman, on presenting himself to the assembly, was greeted with prolonged applause, after which he proceeded with the accompanying address:—

"MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,— I gladly take this opportunity to join in the chorus of praise of this magnificent building, and of the great and good man to whose memory it is dedicated. This building is not the first proof on this spot that public spirit and munificence may pass by inheritance from father to son. Nor are these the only good qualities transmitted by descent. The workshops in the valley and the elegant structures above are testimonials to the worth of the simple, manly virtues which are the granite foundations of New England life. Industry, frugality, patience, integrity,— these were the patrimony of the first Oliver Ames, and he gave them unimpaired to his children. [Applause.] It is among my earliest recollections that I was brought here by my father to see what one determined, upright, unaided man could do. We hear of men who dare to call a spade a spade. There are too many

men who dare to call a shovel that which is not a shovel. Oliver Ames was not such a man. A Boston merchant told me that he made a wagon journey of a thousand miles in South Africa, and among all the Boers and Bushmen and half-breeds — and some of those half-breeds have proved very stalwart of late — he never found men so ignorant or kraals so small that they did n't have and appreciate Ames's shovels. To them the mystic letters 'Oliver Ames & Sons' meant honest materials and faithful work. It was more wonderful because they were not used to it. From another quarter they receive guns that go off at the wrong time and at the wrong place; rum that will neither cheer nor inebriate (that would n't trouble any of this family); knives that will not scalp, — no, not even scalp a railroad ticket. [Laughter.] It is pleasant, in this age of shams, to know that at the Cape of Good Hope, in Australia, in New Zealand, at the ends of the earth, and in the farthest islands of the sea, this old Massachusetts brand, — this Old Colony brand, — stands all the world over for thorough work, tough as ash and true as steel. [Applause.] Remembering the part which spade and shovel play in civilizing the earth, an honest implement of this kind seems to be a fit emblem of progress. And our friend, with his faithful brother, took a first rank among the leaders of industrial enterprise.

"The story of the Pacific Union Railroad has been often told, but it will always be a new wonder that this stupendous scheme was fashioned during the stress of a civil war that threatened the existence of our government. As I think of Oakes Ames leaving his war-work at the State House, and planning in the midst of defeats for this great triumph, — setting his will against the strength of the Rocky Mountains, and his faith above the fears of millions, — I am reminded of a grand passage from John Milton (which I will not quote), in which he speaks of the beleaguered city of London, with its rivers blockaded, the enemy daily threatening its walls, yet with its people studying, discussing, inventing things never discussed or invented before; showing confidence in their cause and contempt for the enemy like that of the Roman, who paid full price for the land on which the besieging force of the invader was encamped. So did our friend risk his fortune to improve and adorn the republic, which seemed to many stricken unto death.

"And then we recall those other words of Milton, which need little change for application to-day, and I say to our departed friend as Milton said to his friend, —

“ ‘Thou chief of men,
 Whom through a cloud not of war only, but detractions rude,
 Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
 To high success thy glorious way hast ploughed.
 Peace hath her victories
 No less renowned than war.’ [Applause.]

“This hall needs no further adornment; but if anything ever should be added, let it be an historical picture of that scene when Abraham Lincoln, having signed the contract for building the road, threw his right arm across the broad shoulders of Oakes Ames, and exclaimed, ‘Your name, Mr. Ames, will live longer in history than mine.’ That was too much; for as long as our race honors faith and loves simplicity and admires devotion, so long will the name of Lincoln be remembered and honored among men. [Applause.] But it is true that, while generation after generation of travelers shall pass the summit of the Union Pacific, they will see the calm features of the two brothers, as they look down forever upon their mighty work; and they will see not only a memorial of the men, but a memorial of the faith and confidence which the people of America had in those men.

[To Mr. Ames.] “Your father afterward fell upon evil days and evil tongues, but among those who criticised him and those who betrayed him — among all who knew him, friend or foe — there was not one man who believed that Oakes Ames ever had or ever wished to have in his purse one dishonest dollar. I recall the day when George B. Upton turned from the bulletin board — George B. Upton, as upright a merchant and as true a man as ever lived — and said to me, ‘Judge, Oakes Ames has been condemned, and you or I, if we had it, would trust him with uncounted gold to-day.’ The basest of the base never dared to doubt his personal honor. [Applause.]

“I have gladly added my feeble tribute to the precious offerings of the day. But our eloquent friends will permit me to say that the complete eulogy of your father cannot be given in the absence of the man who knew him best and loved him most. We shall not know all that could be said of Oakes Ames, because Governor Andrew is silent in the grave. It is something to remember of a departed friend that he gained and kept the confidence of Abraham Lincoln, the love of John A. Andrew.” [Applause.]

The chairman: “I have now the pleasure of introducing to you Hon. Robert R. Bishop, President of the Massachusetts Senate.”

After the applause had subsided, President Bishop spoke to the assembly as follows : —

“MR. PRESIDENT, — How well this massive structure represents the character of the strong and noble man it commemorates you know. He was the true product of a New England town, and his sons have built in his honor a house for the town, a gathering-place for independent men in the business of self-government, a home for the town meeting, as the fittest memorial to speak of him to coming generations. He has many memorials. Many honors rest upon his name and upon his career, — rest as the sunlight rests through the windows of the building which his sons have given as a crown upon his name and his memory. This town which he loved ; the neighboring city, so full of the great power of his business activity ; the State, whose institutions he cherished ; the arms of steel which, both in a commercial and political sense, bind the nation together and render it inseparable, laid across the continent by his indomitable will, his steady faith, and his unflagging perseverance, and over which, from the top of the highest peak of the mountains, his face and that of his noble brother, carved in medallion, are soon to look, — all speak his worth, and tell with reverence of his memory.

“But no one, and not all of these memorials, not even though erected by the pious hands of affection and watched with the tender care and solicitude of children, are his truest and fullest monument. Better than these is the consciousness which we have of the worth and nobility of character of Oakes Ames. His proudest and most perfect monument is in our hearts, in our deep sense of what he was. When we think of his massive mould in heart and spirit no less than in body, of his strength and simplicity, of his inflexibility and patience amid great undertakings and the heaviest difficulties ; when we remember the amplitude of the unselfish works accomplished by him for mankind, we say of him, —

“‘Such was our friend ; formed on the good old plan,
A true and brave and downright honest man.’

“Such a monument will indeed endure. Every memento which affection can rear may pass away ; the most enduring work of human skill to his memory may perish ; from the tablets on the Sierras his lineaments will crumble and fade and disappear ; while continually in the generations to come

" 'Death will mould in calm completeness
The statue of his life.' "

[Applause.]

The chairman next presented Hon. Charles J. Noyes, Speaker of the House of Representatives, who made the following address : —

" I am grateful, Mr. President, for the opportunity to participate on this occasion. I cannot hope to add much ; I come only to lay a single flower upon the altar of grateful remembrance. Nor do I rise in any spirit of ambitious panegyric. This noble memorial, erected by filial affection, and dedicated in loving friendship, with simple ceremonies, is far higher service. These earnest faces of friends and neighbors are a tribute more eloquent than any possible speech of mine. Nay, this lovely New England village, so typical of all that is best in our New England life, utters to-day testimony beyond any phrase my lips can coin. How its very industry recalls the active life on which all our thoughts are centred ! How the past returns unbidden ! The mighty engine-throb seems but the pulsation of his tireless spirit ; the forge-glow but the flash of his unconquerable zeal ; the town itself but the vision of his sublime faith peopling the trackless wilderness, and covering those mighty western slopes with happy homes. [Applause.]

" I rejoice in this beautiful memorial of filial hearts to the father. I rejoice that hereafter it is in some measure a testimony to the illustrious citizen. As years roll on, the men and women who gather within these walls for instruction or amusement will find ample source of inspiration and encouragement in the manly character, brave endeavor, and sublime heroism of him to whose memory they are dedicated. To the people of North Easton it will be a perpetual lesson of noble daring and lofty achievement. And yet Oakes Ames needs no monument such as this. No towering dome, no fretted arch, no frescoed wall, no chiseled stone, is required to perpetuate the story of his life. No architect can plan or science build a nobler memorial than that his faith made possible. The great highway of commerce which to-day spans the continent and links two oceans is a monument to his zeal, his devotion, his heroism, his unalterable belief in the future of the republic. Many have left footprints along the beaten path of life, but few have made a more enduring impression on the growth and achievements of our age than he to whom, with

loyal gratitude, we this day help dedicate these walls. In the service of great purposes be ours a patience as calm, a fortitude as stern, and a faith as sublime as his." [Applause.]

"I have now the pleasure of introducing to you," continued the chairman, "a gentleman who for several years, and all during the war, was a pastor of Mr. Ames, — Rev. C. C. Hussey, of Billerica."

The presentation was heartily applauded, and Mr. Hussey addressed the assembled multitude in these words: —

"I should exhibit a poorer taste and poorer judgment than I really think I have, if I at this time detained this audience more than a very few minutes. I am very glad to be with you, friends, on this occasion; and if I had the time I would like to turn this gathering, for a very few minutes, into a sort of reunion of family and friends, and speak of some of the things that of course would come uppermost in my mind to-day.

"We have heard almost entirely of Mr. Ames's public life. It is the friends who stood with him, side by side there, who have spoken mostly. The brief word I have to say is in a different direction. Something more than twenty years ago I came here as the first settled pastor of the society now worshipping in the elegant church, the gift of Mr. Ames's brother, Hon. Oliver Ames, of whom I like to speak, of exceeding precious memory to many of you, and certainly to my own heart. It was a day of small things then. It was a day that tried men's souls. We were just entering on the war of the rebellion, and I remember how we stood side by side in that old hall. Some of you remember it. It had no plastering, and was quite unlike this in its appointments. But if there was no plastering on the walls, you worked hard, you of this family, and you of this village; and I well remember how this brother and the younger members of the family stood side by side with every effort, not only to bless and save the country, but to do all that could be done to heal the wounds of thousands and tens of thousands who were suffering in that time.

"Our friend had his humorous side. I well remember the first time I met him socially after I came here. Some one said, 'I understand, Mr. Ames, that you heard something like seventy-five ministers before you asked Mr. Hussey to remain with you, and I think that was rather complimentary to Mr.

Hussey.' We were sitting on the sofa, and Mr. Ames, in his kind, familiar manner, put his hand on my knee, and said, 'Oh, no, no; that was not it at all. But you see we had heard a good many ministers. We had got tired, and were glad to take anybody that came along then.' [Laughter.]

"I well remember, and I like to speak of it here, the noble stand that Mr. Ames took for the cause of temperance. [Applause.] I remember his example, the influence of his life, and the atmosphere that surrounded him. I am glad to know that his principles have descended as a patrimony in the family, and bless the village and bless the country to-day. [Applause.] I remember one incident, and ask you to excuse the tenderness of it, if it touches your hearts as it did mine. One night I went into the office, and as I sat there Mr. Ames looked up at me with a very significant expression, then put his hand on his forehead, and said, 'Mr. Hussey, I begin to feel a pressure there.' That was the beginning of the end, and I went home and said to my wife that at last the strong man, so strong in very many respects, had begun to break and begun to bow. But, friends, I think to-day not of the bending and bowing and breaking, but of the getting ready to pass on to a higher and grander life, where all clouds that gathered about him here were to be dispersed and are dispersed, as they will be below. The real gold of that character will come out without alloy, revealed on high, and also revealed and finally read and known of all men.

"It is a good work that you have done. Think of it, — children building a monument to a father's memory! It is not every father's memory that we want to build a monument to, and it is not every family that wants to build monuments to its own honored name that has the ability; fewer, perhaps, have the disposition: but here they are all combined. You have done a graceful and noble thing, and we are all glad to come and rejoice with you on this occasion, and find this building so nice in all its appointments, which will stand not only as a monument to Oakes Ames's memory, but will stand here as a thing of beauty and a wonderful educator in this community.

"We sometimes hear it said there is danger in our country in the tendency of property to gather into a very few hands. But there are two sides to that. When I look over this village, and recall how it was when I first looked at it, and see what it is to-day in its outward appearance, the business that has sprung up here and which blesses the people, and think that this is the product of the accumulation of property in a few hands, then I see the other side

of this matter, and I say the main point is what kind of hands the property gets into. If it can get into the hands of people who build halls and churches, such people as I am proud and grateful to reckon among my former parishioners, or such as I reckon now among my present parishioners, then I feel it is well, and the country is safe so long as it has that sanctifying influence.

"To the people of this community I address this last additional word: You have these objects of beauty and taste amongst you. Live up to them. Open your minds and hearts to all their grand, elevating influence; and so live as to make these things a joy and a blessing forever." [Applause.]

The chairman next introduced Mr. Henry B. Blackwell, who spoke as follows:—

"MR. CHAIRMAN AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — For nearly forty years I have had the honor and the pleasure of knowing the brothers Oakes and Oliver Ames. We have heard to-day how their reputations stand in the interior of Africa. I cannot go quite so far from home as that, and yet when I first knew them, living as I did in Ohio, I was about as far from the place where we stand to-day, measured by time, as this now is from San Francisco; and, measured by difficulty of access, a good deal farther. I remember a good many ups and downs in the currency of the country, but there is one thing which has known no ups and downs since that time; for then, as now, the Ames shovel was legal tender in every part of the Mississippi Valley. [Applause.]

"I have but a few words to add to those we have heard this afternoon. In order rightly to estimate the mental and moral greatness of the man whom we meet to honor, we must remember the circumstances under which his work was done. In this reconstructed Union, in the enjoyment of peace and prosperity, we have almost forgotten the condition of the country when Oakes Ames entered public life, less than twenty years ago. The moral agitation against slavery had culminated in rebellion and civil war. It was the dark and dreary hour dreaded by Thomas Jefferson and foretold by Daniel Webster, when States discordant and belligerent were involved in fratricidal conflict. In that crisis, Providence raised up a galaxy of patriots and statesmen equal to an unparalleled emergency. As I recall those leaders, many of whom we knew, — Lincoln, and Sumner, and Andrew, and Chase, and Sew-

ard, and Stanton, and Fessenden, and Grant, and Greeley, and many more, — I count among these historic names, equally valuable and indispensable, those of Oakes and Oliver Ames [Applause], the builders of the Union Pacific Railway, the pioneers of a reconstructed Union and a continental civilization.

“That great national highway had become a military and political necessity. The Pacific slope, peopled largely from the South, was separated from us by almost impassable barriers, by desert plains and snow-clad mountains. The population was disaffected, and liable at any moment to join the ranks of secession. Yet year after year Congress sought in vain for the men and the means to do the work. When President Lincoln said to the brothers Ames, ‘It is necessary for the Union that this railway should be constructed,’ they subscribed liberally; and still it was not built. Years passed. The struggle deepened. A company had been formed, but it failed to command public confidence. Lands were granted, but they were unsalable. The credit of the United States was tendered, but it was doubted. When the Credit Mobilier Construction Company broke down, when the work was apparently at an end, and the enterprise in danger of being abandoned, Oakes Ames came forward and took on his own shoulders that terrible contract of forty-seven millions of dollars; risked his whole fortune, risked his position, risked his health, risked everything. And why? Not to make money, for men of his wealth who want to make money never take risks. It was because he was willing to give up his money, his life if necessary, for the sake of the country he loved. [Applause.] What other motive could he have had? He was a man past middle life, possessed of an ample fortune, rich beyond the dreams of ordinary men. He was out of debt and out of danger, the head of a prosperous business. He had social standing, political position, and a future without a cloud. He risked them all. He never asked a single favor from the government. He kept faith with friends and foes. He was as frank and open as the day. When, by his indomitable energy, the road was completed, and the legitimate fruits of fame and fortune were assured, he stood like a rock, refusing to let his associates be plundered, and thereby became the mark of private malice and political detraction. [Applause.]

“All that is past. A grateful nation already does him justice. The highest legal tribunals of the country have rendered their verdict in his favor. To-day a thousand citizens of his native State meet in the village of his birth, to join his children and his children’s children in paying tribute to his memory.

"In the great future which is opening before us, when this country shall have become the undisputed leader of the world, — with every improvement, with every discovery, with every reform, moral and material, which the civilizing influences of society will develop, — fresh lustre will be added to the name and the fame of the man whom we commemorate.

"In the great success of his life Oakes Ames had a worthy partner, — his brother, Oliver Ames. Nothing could be more beautiful than the coöperation of these two brothers, so different, yet so gifted in the high qualities of leadership. I like to think of them together. They were necessary to each other. Each added qualities that the other lacked. Oakes Ames had that daring, that genius of progress, which led him to feel that

" ' He either fears his fate too much,
Or his desert is small,
Who fears to put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all.' "

Oliver Ames had that imperturbable sagacity which acted as a balance-wheel upon the executive qualities of his brother and made the combination invincible. They were like David and Jonathan, lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not long divided.

"In conclusion, let me say that when wealth is consecrated, as this man consecrated his, to the highest purposes of the State and of civilization we shall cease to fear that large fortunes are dangerous to the republic. We shall measure greatness by a new standard, and go on in the march of progress under the leadership of our men of property,

" ' Till the war-drum throbs no longer, and the battle flags are furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.' " [Applause.]

"I shall next call upon Colonel Jonas H. French," said the chairman, "and if he speaks over five minutes he will hear the mallet come down ; and I shall call upon Rev. R. R. Meredith to close the exercises."

After the applause was ended, Colonel French came forward, and indulged in the following remarks : —

"MR. PRESIDENT, — I have not remodeled my speech. Our friends who have just spoken followed your suggestion, and remodeled their speeches,

doubtless, by adding a few sentences while the band played. [Laughter.] But, sir, this is a gladsome day, and we are here to rejoice. Years ago, the silver cord was loosed and the golden bowl was broken, and we deposited in your graveyard all that was left of Oakes Ames. We are glad, sir, to-day to join in paying honor to that man whom all of us have occasion to love and to honor. We dedicate this beautiful structure to the manifold virtues of that man; and we who have come here dedicate it as a monument of the undying love and ceaseless affection of his sons. [Applause.]

"I can only, in the moment left me, speak of Mr. Ames as a business man; and as such he was an unquestioned leader of men of peculiar power. You, his associates, well know the struggle that came of the building of the great, transcontinental railroad. You know what he endured. You know how much of a martyr he was to that great work. I say, well may we do honor to his sons, who are carrying out to-day with courage and intrepidity the great work of which these men — for their names are inseparable — were the pioneers.

"I would tell you, if I had the time, of what belongs to this great family, and how much honor we should award to it. We believe this: that they are entitled to be regarded as the pioneers of the railroad interest of the country; and with their names, those of their sons should be united. I can only offer you, in this brief time, the salutations that we owe to our friends, the sons of Oakes Ames, and extend to them our heartiest and sincerest congratulations." [Applause.]

The Rev. Mr. Meredith then came forward, on being personally announced as the last speaker, and addressed the assembly in these words: —

"MR. PRESIDENT, — When the invitation came to me to be present on this most interesting occasion, I sat with it a few minutes in my hand, and let my mind run back over the history of the past years; and in a few moments after that review I said, 'Oakes Ames needs no such monument to perpetuate his memory among a grateful people.' When I came down here to-day, and looked at these buildings of industry, of beauty, of culture, and of religion, I said, 'Oakes Ames does not need an additional memorial. Deeds are his best monument.' And yet, though this does not seem to be needed, our hearts

have told us all that it is a very admirable, exquisitely beautiful, and touching act of remembrance on the part of his children. It gives me, as it gives you, the greatest pleasure to join with them to-day in the exercises, which are now closing, of consecrating this building, as one of the speakers has said, to be a crown of light that shall lead this people gratefully to remember the good and wise and brave man who has gone from earth.

“ I have said I am glad to be here. I am glad for another thing. I am glad that so many words have been so fitly spoken on this occasion that it is not necessary that I should detain this audience a single moment longer.” [Applause.]

At this point, the chairman declared the public exercises closed.

TRIBUTES TO OAKES AMES.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS RECEIVED.

FROM SECRETARY BLAINE.

"I knew your father well, having been a member of the House of Representatives the entire period of his service in that body. He was distinguished among his associates, both in and out of Congress, for solidity and uprightness of character, for sterling sense, for sound judgment, for extraordinary energy, and for manly courage. He was a model of simplicity and sobriety in his habits of life, had large wealth without pride of purse, and always had the quickest and kindest sympathy with young men in their early and difficult struggles. He embodied in himself the Charity which suffereth long and is kind, which envieth not, which vaunteth not itself, which is not puffed up.

"He enjoyed the profoundest confidence of those who knew him best, and your filial devotion to his memory does honor to yourselves, and gives pleasure to his wide circle of surviving friends."

FROM EX-SECRETARY WILLIAM M. EVARTS.

"I am obliged to be in Washington, or it would give me pleasure to join with his sons and neighbors and friends in the country at large in the honor to be paid his memory by the dedication at North Easton, on the 17th inst., of the Memorial Hall which the pious affection of your brothers and yourself has erected in honor of Oakes Ames.

"I knew Mr. Oakes Ames's sterling qualities and his public spirit, and had great respect for them."

FROM SENATOR HENRY L. DAWES.

"Mr. Ames was indeed a great man, and accomplished in his life-time a great work. He built his own monument, which will outlast the marble and the brass fashioned to keep others in mind. While others were fighting battles for the unity of the nation, he bound it into one with iron bonds which no

force can break asunder. We rightly crown with laurels the hero who led our armies to victory, and I rejoice that the nation is not forgetting him who, with no less courage or hazard, by the arts of peace achieved a victory more grand and far reaching in its consequences than was ever won over men on the field of battle.

"What more fitting tribute could be paid by his sons to that strong insight of Mr. Ames into the source of our strength as a self-governing people than a Memorial Town Hall, that Parliament House of the American democracy in which the love of liberty was first nursed, and in which it has since grown strong. The town-meeting is the life-blood of the republic, and in it are reared the rugged, liberty-loving men like Oakes Ames, who are ever ready to stake all to build it up and bind it about, that it may abide forever."

FROM EX-GOVERNOR ALEXANDER H. BULLOCK.

"I recall with pleasure the intimate acquaintance I formed with Mr. Oakes Ames, when he served in one branch of the government and I in another, under the administration of our mutual friend, Governor Andrew. I well knew then, and I like now to remember, his signal efficiency in the patriotic enterprise of placing Massachusetts strongly in the field in the early days of the war. I saw him but seldom afterwards, but I could not overlook the great national service he rendered in the construction of that vast public work which has proved a tie of union of the States, and a promoter of our common prosperity. In the complex movements and combinations incident to that undertaking, circumstances arose which, in certain particulars, brought his motives under a misconstruction which I have at all times believed to be unjust."

FROM EX-GOVERNOR WILLIAM CLAFLIN.

"My acquaintance with your honored father began early in the antislavery contest, when bold, large-hearted, conscientious men, from the business walks of life, were greatly needed to encourage and sustain the movement.

"His name was a tower of strength, and his counsel was always sought on all difficult questions. Nor was counsel alone obtained.

"His time, his talents, and his means were freely given to the cause. He was a leader amongst men.

"Those who knew him in those days of trial cherish his memory with af-

fectionate remembrance, for they constantly witnessed his love of justice, his devotion to humanity, and his earnest desire to promote every good work."

FROM EX-GOVERNOR WILLIAM B. WASHBURN.

"For nine consecutive years, during the most trying period of our country's history, it was my privilege to be most intimately associated with him. The longer I knew him, the more I admired his grand and noble qualities. The last twelve years of his life were most faithfully devoted to the public service of his State and country. During this period, he was called to fill many responsible and trying positions, and in none of them was he ever found wanting. So conscientious was he that he never would allow private business to interfere with the faithful discharge of his public trusts. It is not my purpose to follow his public career or to enlarge upon the special qualities of his character; but I have often thought that in his indomitable energy and will, in his strong self-reliance, and in his rapid march to success he displayed one of the grandest types of the American character."

FROM EX-GOVERNOR WILLIAM GASTON.

"I am happy to have an opportunity of expressing my great respect for the character and memory of the late Hon. Oakes Ames. By his great energy, courage, and ability, a very important public work was brought to a successful completion; and I think his services were of such a character as to justly entitle him to the respect and gratitude of his countrymen."

FROM EX-GOVERNOR THOMAS TALBOT.

"It is indeed fitting that such a memorial building should be erected to one whose services to the State and nation were so eminent. But he has quite as enduring a monument in the memory of those who witnessed the gigantic efforts which led to the completion of the enterprise which bound together with indissoluble bonds the shores of the Atlantic and the Pacific. This alone should be sufficient to keep his memory green in the hearts of the people of the nation."

FROM EX-GOVERNOR ALEXANDER H. RICE.

"How much in keeping it is with the large-hearted liberality of the Ames family to supplement the noble enterprise of their deceased father with the

gift of a Town Hall to their neighbors and fellow-citizens! I heartily congratulate you on so meritorious an achievement. I knew Mr. Oakes Ames well, and had the best opportunities of watching his public career; and I became an admirer of the grandeur of his enterprise, the clearness and sagacity of his perceptions in large undertakings, and I believe in the purity of his motives in his intercourse with all men. He was a noble specimen of American manhood; and no catalogue of the great and deserving men of his generation will be complete that does not contain the name of Oakes Ames."

FROM HON. ARTEMAS HALE.

"The infirmities incident to an age of almost a century must be my excuse for not accepting your kind invitation to the dedication of the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall.

"I should be much gratified to be there and witness the ceremonies of the occasion; but more particularly to show by my presence my high appreciation of the character of Mr. Ames, and my disapproval of the injustice done him by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Eighth Congress. He rendered very essential services as a member of Congress; and his agency in the construction of the Pacific Railroad was deserving of a *statue* rather than a vote of censure, which was a disgrace to that body, and ought to be, and I hope will be, expunged from its journals."

FROM HON. SAMUEL J. TILDEN.

"The monument of filial piety by which the sons of the late Mr. Ames propose to perpetuate the memory of the virtues and usefulness of their father does them honor. While it will be in itself a public benefaction, it will testify to future generations that the public and ennobling sympathies of the father were most appreciated where he was best known, and that they survive in his descendants. . . . It would gratify me to join with his old neighbors in paying even that feeble tribute of respect to the memory of one who has a title to rank among his country's benefactors."

FROM WENDELL PHILLIPS.

"I am very sorry I cannot be present and pay my tribute of respect to one of the most honest, patriotic, devoted, and far-sighted men that Massachusetts has lent to the national councils in our day.

"While he stood head and shoulders above all her Representatives in furthering the material interests of the nation, he was equally distinguished above most of them by his clear view of what honor and justice demanded of us, and by his manly, outspoken, and self-sacrificing efforts to make that the law of the land. I held him always in special honor, and felt it a privilege to call him my friend, admiring his sturdy and straightforward honesty of life and purpose as a type of what a true man in a republic should be."

FROM HON. JOSIAH QUINCY.

"I regret that I shall be unable to attend the dedication of the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall at North Easton, to express personally my appreciation of the energy that connected the Atlantic and Pacific States, and thus secured their federal union to future generations."

FROM FRANKLIN HAVEN, ESQ.

"It was my good fortune to enjoy a pleasant acquaintance with your respected father during the last twenty years of his life, and thus to acquire, as I believe I did, a true and an appreciative knowledge of his character.

"If I were with you to-day, I should ask permission to state my entire confidence in the great simplicity, the integrity, patriotism, and philanthropy of his character.

"That he was endowed with a large business capacity, courage, untiring perseverance, and indomitable energy is attested, beyond all question, in the successful achievement of a great and magnificent public enterprise."

FROM HON. MARSHALL P. WILDER.

"It was my good fortune to be acquainted with the father of Mr. Ames more than fifty years ago, and who, had he lived to this time, would have been one hundred and two years of age. He was a man of enterprise, dignified yet courteous in manners, and of the strictest integrity of character from principle; and what was not common then, he was a professed temperance man. In a word, he was of the type of a true Christian gentleman.

"It has also been my privilege to know Oliver Ames, Jr., his third son, to whom the public is indebted for many beneficent acts, and on whose tomb I would this day drop a flower, in grateful remembrance of his usefulness and excellence of character.

"Nor would I forget, on this day of consecration, the sons of these noble men, who have conferred and are conferring honor on our Commonwealth and blessings on their fellow-men.

"Long may the beautiful edifice which you are now to dedicate stand as a memorial, not only of the man whose name it bears, but also of a family which is so worthily represented in the annals of New England history."

FROM HON. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER.

"Nothing would give me greater personal satisfaction than by my presence to testify my regard for him as a man, my great appreciation of his character as a statesman, and my admiration of his brave and enterprising spirit, which gave to this country the Union Pacific Railroad. Without him, I am of the confident belief that that great link which binds the East and the West together, in the bond which we all trust will never be severed, would not have been made within this generation, if at all. Other interests might have prevented it in the future. It required all the necessities of the war, all the aid the government could give it, to make the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad a plausible enterprise; and it became a possible enterprise only because his large-hearted and brave spirit led him to take upon himself the actual burden of the undertaking.

"It is easy to criticise after the fact, but whoever will put his mind back to the hour when Oakes Ames loaned many millions of honestly earned money to do that work will, upon an examination of the conditions, I am certain, come to the same conclusion that I have.

"With an energy never faltering, with a directness never swerving, with a faith never failing, he stood behind it, pushing it forward with the belief that it was as necessary for the unification of the country as was the successful termination of the war itself.

"Supposed political necessities and fears of newspaper attacks caused certain men, who, if they had had half of Mr. Ames's courage and one quarter of his honesty, would have scorned to do such a deed, to attempt to protect themselves by interposing him as a shield between them and acts which were only wrong because the denial of them was a confession of that implication, and which, if, as in the case of some of them, they had been courageously avowed, would never have made a ripple even upon the turbid stream of political strife. He almost alone stood by his convictions and his acts, and told both in

a plain spirit of simple honesty, which was convincing to the mind of every true man of the purity of both his intentions and his doings.

"My relations to him as his colleague made me entirely familiar with the whole subject. Untouched myself by any accusation, I could and did form an unbiased, and the lapse of time and course of events convince me an accurate, judgment of Oakes Ames, as one of the best, most unselfish, most upright, and most brave and true of all the public men I have ever known."

FROM HON. JOHN SHERMAN, SENATOR OF UNITED STATES FROM OHIO.

"It would have given me great pleasure to have accepted your invitation, and in this way shown my respect for the important and valuable services rendered by him to his country and State. I knew him well at the time he was bearing the heavy load of the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad, when but few of his detractors would have had the courage to take his place."

FROM HON. WILLIAM P. FRYE, SENATOR OF UNITED STATES FROM MAINE.

"Imperative engagements prevent my acceptance of your invitation, but I cannot decline without declaring that in my opinion Mr. Ames is entitled to this recognition of his work by his friends; ay, more, that the American people might well unite in such a memorial to enterprise, public spirit, and honesty. I say this, gentlemen, not unmindful of any of the history of the past twenty years, nor forgetful of my participation in any of its events."

FROM HON. GEORGE B. LORING, UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE.

"He was a kind and cordial friend to me, and always encouraged me in every attempt to defend the right and to accept the most humane doctrines of government. So long as untiring enterprise and great comprehension and large capacity for affairs, unceasing industry and high and honorable purpose, are admired and respected, his name will be borne in grateful remembrance."

FROM EX-GOVERNOR EDWIN D. MORGAN, OF NEW YORK.

"I regret that my engagements here are such as to prevent my acceptance of your very kind invitation: otherwise it would give me much pleasure to be present upon the occasion of so appropriate recognition of the eminent services of the Hon. Oakes Ames in developing the resources of the country and in

establishing facilities for its commerce ; and to whom, more than to any other man, the country is indebted for the early completion of a railroad to the Pacific, thus binding forever with an iron chain those new, rich States and Territories to our older civilization."

FROM COL. FRANCIS H. PEABODY, OF KIDDER, PEABODY & CO., OF BOSTON.

"I should be glad to be one in any testimonial of respect to your father, — one of the most honest and brave men I ever came in contact with. It is a pleasure to me to remember that I took every opportunity to proclaim my opinion of him at a moment when he was living and suffering from cruel injustice."

FROM ISAAC H. BAILEY, OF NEW YORK.

"Not only is this tribute of filial affection an admirable conception, but the name of Oakes Ames deserves to be held in grateful remembrance by the American people as one of the country's benefactors. His far-reaching forecast projected, and his tireless energy carried into successful operation, one of the grandest enterprises of the century. In common with many of his contemporaries, he did not escape the noisome breath of clamor ; but all who knew him can bear witness to his disinterestedness, sincerity, and truthfulness. His life was simple and pure, his disposition benevolent, his conduct irreproachable ; and no word of eulogy that has been or will be pronounced over his ashes will exceed the measure of his worth."

FROM EDWARD ATKINSON.

"The time will surely come when it will not be left to his sons and other relatives, or even to his personal friends, to erect a monument by which his memory may be perpetuated.

"As time goes on, full justice will be done to the grand work which he accomplished ; and his name will go down in history as one of the men who, in an age of danger and difficulty, conferred upon this country one of the greatest benefits. He was one who aided, perhaps as much as even those who commanded armies, in maintaining the union of these States."

FROM JUDGE JOHN A. CAMPBELL, OF NEW ORLEANS.

"I should have had pleasure in testifying the respect I had for your honorable father ; and also my appreciation for the vigorous character, the compre-

hensive and enlarged views, the untiring industry, the probity and simplicity that distinguished him."

FROM HON. HARVEY JEWELL.

"I had occasion to have quite frequent intercourse with Oakes Ames at one period of my professional life. No man whom I ever met inspired me with a higher idea of business intelligence, and above all of the utmost integrity and probity, than did he. As I respected him while living, I revere his memory when dead, and I believe the American people owe to him more than any man for the advantages which it seems to me his energy and sagacity have given them."

FROM HON. J. F. FARNSWORTH, OF ILLINOIS.

"I knew Mr. Oakes Ames well, having served many years in Congress with him, and have great respect for his memory; for in these elements of character which constitute genuine human greatness — energy, courage, sterling integrity, and truth — he was certainly the peer of any man."

FROM HON. B. W. HARRIS.

"For his courage in undertaking, and his perseverance, in the face of opposition, in carrying to successful ending, enterprises of such magnitude and vast national importance, our country owes him a debt of gratitude. His best and most lasting memorial will be the memory of his great actions, his pure life, and great integrity."

FROM HON. M. P. KENNARD, SUB-TREASURER.

"I promise myself the pleasure of attending, and shall be satisfied if my presence can testify, even thus remotely, to my warm regard for the memory of him whose name it bears, as one who was always sincere in his friendships, and a generous, unselfish, and public-spirited citizen."

FROM GOV. N. G. ORDWAY, OF DAKOTA TERRITORY.

"The stupendous public and private enterprises with which the name of Oakes Ames will stand indissolubly connected are monuments to his energy, fidelity, and greatness, which misrepresentation can never obscure."

FROM HON. JOSIAH G. ABBOTT.

"I knew and had great respect for your father, and shall be most pleased to be present at the dedication of so fitting a monument to his memory."

FROM B. B. JOHNSON, ESQ., UNITED STATES MARSHAL'S OFFICE, DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS.

"I was in Washington from March, 1863, to July, 1869, and volunteered to assist the Massachusetts State Agent during the terrible influx of the wounded into the hospitals of Washington. I was thrown much in contact with the various Congressmen. I had occasion to need funds often that the State did not furnish, to relieve the wounded. Your father visited two of the hospitals with me — 'Amory Square' — several times, and said, 'When you need money call on me. Don't let any poor fellow suffer, if you can help it.' He slipped twenty-five dollars into my hands then, and other sums frequently afterward, not waiting to be asked, but himself seeking to know the wants. His unostentatious, his genuine generosity, his words and conduct, always impressed me with the feeling, 'He is one of God's noblemen.'"

FROM HON. JOHN E. SANFORD.

"In the community where his life was spent, there is little need to speak of his integrity as a man of business, or of his public spirit and influence as a citizen. All knew and remembered him as a man of large views, noble impulses, and generous sympathies. Whatever the cause or the measure, he was always to be counted on the right side. They remember, too, with grateful pride, his long and conspicuous service in the important public trusts which they again and again committed to his charge, and the great public works to which he devoted himself with a breadth of view, an absorbing faith and courage, a personal force, a self-sacrifice and success, for which there is hardly a parallel in the annals of private or public enterprise.

"But it is not for what he did, more than for what he was, that they who knew him best love and honor his memory. Oakes Ames was an honest man, — straightforward in purpose and action, trustworthy in deed and word. The warp and woof of his nature were such that he could not be otherwise. There was no background to his character on which the sunlight could not be turned.

"We justly assign a high place on the record of meritorious and honorable service to those who, with lofty and unselfish aim, with large ability, and with a mind conscious of rectitude, have labored and accomplished much for their fellow-men. Such is the place which Oakes Ames is entitled to fill,—not only in the affectionate memories of his neighbors and former constituents, but in the opinions of all who rightly estimate his life and character, as a man and a public benefactor."

FROM HON. SAMUEL N. ALDRICH, OF MARLBORO.

"His name and memory should be honored by all true Americans."

FROM SIDNEY BARTLETT, ESQ.

"Mr. Bartlett regrets that he shall not be able to be present at the dedication of the Memorial Hall, which they (the Messrs. Ames) have erected as a token of their filial regard for one who will be long and justly remembered as a public benefactor."

FROM HON. ALBERT BOWKER.

"Oakes Ames, as a great and unselfish projector and patriot, is a part of the history of the country. The charming simplicity and purity of his life, his exceptional enterprise, conspicuous integrity (never doubted by those who knew him),—these, and other endearing qualities of mind and character, caused the appreciative to love and honor him. He was a man,—not an eighth, nor a sixteenth. When he saw the necessity of rapid communication between the Atlantic and Pacific, he put his great energy and fortune to the accomplishment of it."

FROM CHARLES BREWER, ESQ., OF JAMAICA PLAIN.

"I regret that my health and lameness, as well as my age,—seventy-eight,—will not permit me to accept your kind invitation.

"Oakes Ames was an old and respected friend, with whom I had very pleasant associations in our business matters; and I cherish his memory as one who was noted, among the merchants of Boston, for his high sense of honor and for his strict integrity throughout his business life. As a friend, I mourn his loss and his pleasant manners and cheerful smile."

FROM WILLIAM ENDICOTT, JR., ESQ., OF BOSTON.

"I should be glad to show by my presence that the falsehood of members of Congress and the misrepresentations of the newspapers did not lessen my respect for your father, whom I have always regarded as the victim of gross injustice."

FROM THOMAS DANA, ESQ., OF BOSTON.

"Allow me to express my admiration of the filial love and devotion of the children of that great man, Oakes Ames, who did so much for the material progress of America, and of whom all her people should be proud."

FROM HON. JOHN F. DILLON, LATE JUDGE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT,
NEW YORK.

"All persons who knew Mr. Ames, and all who had data for forming a judgment, knew him to have been a man of solid worth and sterling qualities. His career was one of usefulness not only to the immediate community in which he lived, but also to the country at large. . . . He did not, indeed, escape detraction, but his name and memory have survived it; and the public judgment concerning his career is as gratifying to his friends as it is encouraging to all persons who are unjustly assailed."

FROM HENRY VILLARD, PRESIDENT OF THE NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD
COMPANY.

"I will avail myself of this opportunity to tender my tribute of admiration to the undaunted spirit, energy, and enterprise of him in whose memory you have erected so becoming a monument in his Massachusetts home. Being myself now engaged in directing the construction of another railroad line across the continent, I can the more thoroughly understand the difficulties that lay in the way of the original Pacific Railroad enterprise, so many years ago, and which, but for him, would never have been successfully overcome."

FROM HON. GEORGE P. SANGER.

"I hold in very high respect the memory of your father and his great services to the country, and regret that I cannot be present at these commemorative exercises."

FROM HON. P. EMORY ALDRICH.

"It would afford me great pleasure to be able to accept the invitation, and to unite with other citizens in paying respect to the memory of one to whom the whole country is indebted for its most magnificent railway, uniting the two oceans, and binding all the intermediate States in an indissoluble bond."

FROM HON. JOHN B. ALLEY.

"I can most truly say that I have never met a man whose life was more in obedience to what he believed the principles of justice and right demanded than was that of my late honored friend. I am grieved to say that he passed away in the midst of his usefulness, under the sting of a grossly unjust public censure, occasioned by one of those unaccountable delusions which sometimes take possession of the public mind in moments of passion and excitement, in which facts and argument are powerless to convince. . . . For his present vindication, it need only be said that the stockholders of that great corporation, which he was accused of wronging, by an unanimous vote have erected to his memory, upon the summit of the great range of mountains over which the Union Pacific Railroad passes, a large and costly monument, as a reminder to coming generations of *their* appreciation of his gigantic efforts and stainless honor in all his dealings with the government and themselves, in pushing to its full completion this immense enterprise."

FROM HON. E. S. TOBEY, POSTMASTER OF BOSTON.

"I regret that, in consequence of an absence from the city for several days past, an accumulation of duties will deprive me of the privilege of uniting with you and your guests in perpetuating the memory of one who has rendered such eminent service to our country, and without whose indomitable energy and intelligent enterprise the establishing of the Union Pacific Railroad would still be a project to be accomplished in the indefinite future. The influence of this grand enterprise alone on the commercial prosperity of our country, and in strengthening the political ties between the States on the Pacific coast and those on the Atlantic shore, cannot be adequately estimated."

FROM SIDNEY DILLON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD.

"It would give me the greatest pleasure to be present at this meeting, and participate in the ceremonies in honor of the memory of my respected and esteemed friend; and while I may be absent in person, my heartfelt sympathy will be with you.

"I trust that the hall thus dedicated may be enjoyed for many years to come by the people of North Easton, and serve to keep fresh the memory of one who deserves the highest praise and respect of all."

FROM S. DEANE, ESQ., OF WASHINGTON, D. C.

"It gives me great joy to observe that you mean to build into the very structures of your town enduring memorials of the noble character and manly virtues of your father. In this way you will fix lasting marks to tell the future student and coming generations of the man who, in his time, did great things, and left a memory rich in all that is worth being emulated or praised in a civilized and Christian community. And so men will come to weigh aright all that slanderous tongues may have said; the wicked utterances will fade away in the better understanding the coming generations will surely have of the great and good man, whose memory is to be perpetuated in this new structure."

FROM SENATOR S. C. POMEROY, OF KANSAS.

"I have wondered if a little incident which fell under my own observation, while your father was a resident at Washington, would be of value and interest to you. The incident is as follows: When the Union army, repelling the threatened attack on Washington, near the close of the late war, was encamped in the neighborhood of Silver Springs, near the Blair Place, it took for its subsistence the crops, provisions, and animals of a farmer in the neighborhood, and left him destitute. This so affected him that he lost his reason, and was taken to the asylum near Washington. The mother of this family likewise became prostrated with sickness.

"Under these circumstances, the eldest child, a girl of some sixteen years, came to Washington, bringing the papers which the army officers had left at the house. Her object was to collect the money due from the government. She applied to the Hon. Oakes Ames for advice and assistance. She asked

him if she should employ a lawyer to collect it. Mr. Ames looked at her papers, and answered, 'No, you can collect it yourself, and save the expense.' She hesitated, saying she did not know how, or where to go. 'I will go with you,' was his instant reply. So he walked with the poor girl all the way to the War Department, where he introduced her to the proper officer. The case was examined, and in due time the money was paid.

"Encouraged by an act of such kindness, she called again upon Mr. Ames, seeking to procure employment from the government, to support the family, as she said. She was asked if she could not teach school, and answered, 'I have not finished school myself;' and it would take a whole year before she could get through, and she could not now have money to go any further. Mr. Ames asked her how much it would cost in money for her to go through and become qualified to teach. She answered, fully one hundred dollars, and that she could not think of. 'But if you had the money, would you go through and teach school?' he inquired. 'Oh, I should be glad to,' was her ready reply. Mr. Ames gave her the needed one hundred dollars on the spot, and with a heart swelling with gratitude and eyes filled with tears she bade him good-by.

"I watched the course of this young girl until, after graduating, she taught the school in her own neighborhood. At length, desirous of larger compensation, she applied to General Spinner, who gave her an appointment in the Treasury Department, and, so far as I know, she is still employed there. Her father died in the asylum. She and her mother managed to support and educate the family of several younger children, she specially taking upon herself the task of giving a college education to one of her promising brothers.

"The blessings of many, ready to perish, will follow the memory of the man who gave timely and generous aid to such destitute ones, without ostentation or display."

FROM HON. HOSEA M. KNOWLTON, OF NEW BEDFORD.

"I should take great satisfaction in assisting, so far as I could, in a ceremony, the object of which is to honor the memory of one whom in his lifetime I so much respected for his sturdy and manly character, and of whose record and work, as a citizen of Massachusetts, I am so proud, as the late Hon. Oakes Ames."

FROM HON. E. C. MONK, OF STOUGHTON, MASS.

"Impressed on my mind early in life are the sterling qualities and virtuous character of Oakes Ames. His patriotism, sound principles, vigorous and active life, endeared him to all who knew his worth personally."

FROM JOHN C. S. HARRISON, GOVERNMENT DIRECTOR OF UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

"It is with profound regret that I have to express my inability to join in doing honor to the name of a man towards whom I always entertained feelings of the greatest respect.

"Your father was my friend, and that relation — a relation which always brings to the surface the flaws and imperfections of baser natures — but emphasized the nobility of his character.

"Generous, charitable, loving, Mr. Ames had all the kindly virtues, and besides he was true as steel. You do well to honor his memory, but he needs no monument to perpetuate his virtues. What he did for his country and humanity will do even more to keep alive in the hearts of his countrymen an imperishable record of his great qualities than the Memorial you have erected to his memory."

FROM HON. ALPHEUS HARDING, OF ATHOL, MASS.

"It would afford me much pleasure to testify by my presence the profound respect I entertain for the character of the man, and my appreciation of the magnificent work he accomplished for the country he loved and served so well."

FROM HON. CHARLES ALLEN, JUDGE SUPREME COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS.

"It would give me great pleasure to attend the dedication of so worthy a Memorial of so remarkable a man as your father, and thus pay my tribute of respect to his merits and memory; but a great pressure of present occupations will render this impossible."

FROM WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, JR., OF BOSTON.

"A much-maligned man was your lamented father, and I should have been glad to testify by my presence my respect for his memory. Your filial vindication of him elicits my cordial sympathy."

FROM A. S. WHEELER, ESQ., OF BOSTON.

"I knew Oakes Ames for many years, and I had entire confidence in his uprightness, integrity, and purity of purpose.

"That confidence was never shaken, and when he died I felt that we had lost an honest man; and it has been my hope that his memory should be vindicated from the cruelly unjust aspersions cast upon him in his life."

FROM DELANO A. GODDARD, LATE EDITOR BOSTON DAILY ADVERTISER.

"I did not have any personal acquaintance with your father, but I believed in him and respected him, and should be glad, if I could, to express it by being present next week."

FROM ROBERT DRAPER, OF CANTON, MASS.

"I can assure you it will give me great pleasure to be present at the dedication of such a noble and worthy tribute of affection, and to listen to a just estimate by able and candid minds of the character and stature of one whose true measure has never yet been taken by the American people."

FROM HON. JOSEPH DAVIS, OF LYNN, MASS.

"I believe Oakes Ames was one of the great benefactors of the age. The great enterprise of connecting by rail the two extremes of our common country was largely due to his energy, his wealth, and his executive ability; and I believe the country is already recognizing his worth as a man, and is placing him high as a public benefactor."

FROM GEORGE TRITCH, OF DENVER, COLORADO.

"I should have taken great pleasure to aid by my humble presence in doing honor to the memory of one of the few of nature's noblemen."

FROM E. W. WILLARD, OF NEWPORT, R. I.

"I have great respect for the memory of your father, to whose integrity of purpose and untiring devotion the country is so largely indebted for the grandest enterprise of the age."

FROM C. B. H. FESSENDEN, OF NEW BEDFORD, MASS.

"I should heartily join in any expression of honor to the memory of one who ventured so boldly and periled so much for the nation, and whose real worth is being surely, though tardily, recognized by his countrymen."

FROM COL. THOMAS W. PIERCE, OF BOSTON.

"He was both great and good, and made his full contribution to the enterprises and the progress of this great and growing country, and I delight to honor his memory."

FROM COL. HOMER B. SPRAGUE, PRINCIPAL OF GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL,
BOSTON.

"I heartily sympathize in your intention to honor the memory of that good and true man, your father, in whom I never lost confidence, not even when the shafts of calumny flew thickest around him. His name is recorded in lasting characters as one of the benefactors of America, worthy of the love and honor of all men."

FROM REV. L. H. SHELDON, OF ANDOVER, MASS.

"I shall most gladly avail myself of your invitation to renew old friendships, and also to do honor to one whose virtues and unselfishness and enterprise were proverbial. It is a noble sight, when worthy sons, favored by Providence, do honor to such a sire. May Heaven bless this memorial offering!"

FROM WILLIAM B. STEVENS, PRESIDENT GLOBE NATIONAL BANK, BOSTON.

"I knew your father long and thoroughly in business, and always loved and respected him as a true man. In the darkest hour, I always defended him to the best of my ability, whenever and wherever I heard him attacked. I honor his memory now with my whole heart."

FROM COL. WILLIAM BORDEN, OF NEW YORK.

"I knew your father well and intimately, and esteemed him highly for all his noble and generous traits, manifested in so many and varied ways, and with hand as open as the heart, that surely none could *know* him but to love him."

FROM JOHN T. TERRY, OF E. D. MORGAN & CO., NEW YORK.

"It is especially gratifying to me to know that you have fulfilled this act of filial duty toward one who was so justly honored and respected by all who knew him intimately; and I beg to add that all who did know him knew an honest man, as well as one who was unselfish to an extraordinary degree. His memory will always be revered by your obedient servant."

FROM REV. W. V. MORRISON, PRESIDING ELDER M. E. CHURCH, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

"Mr. Oakes Ames was a first-class man, and has left many evidences of his business energy and large-hearted generosity to stimulate and bless the present and the rising generation."

FROM SAMUEL LITTLE, OF BOSTON.

"The memory of Oakes Ames will be always cherished by me. As a young man, just entering upon business life, I was indebted to him for many acts of kindness; these never ceased until his death. My business intercourse with him extended through many years, with the greatest esteem for his noble heart and sterling character."

FROM CHIEF JUSTICE LUDELING, OF LOUISIANA.

"I regret that I cannot be present to unite with those who will meet to honor the memory of one whose fame will live when those who calumniated and persecuted him will only be remembered for their cowardice and ingratitude."

FROM C. E. VAIL, OF BLAIRSTOWN, N. J.

"I have so high an esteem for the memory of your father, and so keen a sense of the injustice done him by those who should have been his friends (not to speak of others), that I shall gladly avail myself of the privilege of being present at the dedication of the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall."

FROM SAMUEL TUCKERMAN, OF ST. LOUIS, MO.

"I would gladly be present to aid in honoring the memory of a really great and good man, whom I ever regarded with deep respect, and never can forget; but am here with my family, beyond the Mississippi, to fight for fortune and advancement denied me in the East.

"Pray receive, with my thanks, the expression of my sympathy in the unsullied and increasing fame of your distinguished relative."

FROM HON. FRANK MOREY, M. C., OF LOUISIANA.

"I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with him both in public life and in business association, and in common with many others similarly associated I learned to respect him as a man of broad views and great grasp of mind. The nation, even more than his family, would do itself credit in erecting a monument to his memory for the great work, national in its character, which, had it not been for his energy, indomitable will, and courage, would never have been able to accomplish the national results at that time so desirable in the cause of the Union.

"The reader of history in the future will realize, even more than this generation can comprehend, how essential to national unity was the building of the Pacific Railroad at the time when it *was* built; and will do justice to the memory of those patriotic and courageous men who staked their fortunes on its success when the Union cause looked dark and gloomy."

FROM HON. GINERY TWICHELL.

"The resolve offered in the Massachusetts Legislature in favor of expunging the resolution of censure upon your father, Oakes Ames, meets my hearty approval. While that resolution was under consideration he changed his seat in the House of Representatives for one adjoining my own. On account of the feeble state of his health at that time he was often absent, and I was thus in a position to render him my friendly services, to become familiar with his affairs, and to acquire a more intimate knowledge of the man and the circumstances of the case than many others. Several members who voted to censure him told him, in my presence, that they had voted against their convictions to satisfy public clamor and their constituents. I hope that Congress will nullify a vote of such a character by expunging the resolution that rests

on it, and thus do justice to the memory of an honest man ; for I think I have the evidence of the honesty of Oakes Ames.

"I knew his actions and motives in regard to the Credit Mobilier stock. He made no discrimination in its sale in favor of such members of Congress as took it, but disposed of it to all parties at a uniform price. With that stock I had nothing to do ; but I had other business transactions with him, in which he proved to be more than honorable. I once bargained with him for a parcel of real estate in Brookline, which I was to have for \$4,500, in case he sold it at all. It was sold by his agent, in his absence, for \$6,000. He was not legally bound to me ; but, with his usual magnanimity, directed his agent to pay me even the whole purchase-money, or to institute proceedings to recover the estate for me, if I desired to secure it.

"I recall another instance of his integrity. A quantity of iron, which he had imported for use in his business, and insured, having apparently been injured by wet and rust, the insurance company had the damage appraised, and paid him \$2,500 as the result. But on coming to use the iron, he discovered that there had really been no damage, and he voluntarily refunded the money.

"Oakes Ames needed only to be known in order to be appreciated. That justice may be publicly done his memory is my most sincere wish."

FROM HON. J. B. GRINNELL, OF IOWA.

"I knew Oakes Ames well for nearly twenty years, though I had no pecuniary transactions with him. I regard him as one of the greatest citizens of our common country and an incorruptible patriot. He was possessed of a comprehensive mind for affairs, and his heart expanded with the widest and warmest sympathies. That his name was tarnished by a thoughtless political cowardice, and that the stain will in good time be effaced, I as little question as I do that truth is eternal. Oakes Ames was of strictly temperate habits ; so schooled in economy that, while in Congress, he chose a comparatively inexpensive mode of life, in order to save money to devote to charity.

"In Iowa, no name wears more honor than his, for he periled his fortune to build the first railroad across our State. And when an attempt was made to stigmatize our Senator-elect, James F. Wilson, by charging that he had been bribed by Oakes Ames, the people of the State scouted the very suggestion of such a transaction, and indorsed the character of Ames by triumphantly sustaining Wilson.

"On my leaving Congress, Mr. Ames, as a friend, offered me Credit Mobilier stock at its market value. If his purpose had been to influence legislation, my successor and those in Congress should have been the selected recipients of his favors. Not one member only, but no less than ten members of that Congress which wrought such an injustice have declared in my hearing that the act was a foolish concession to popular clamor. The late William E. Dodge, of New York, openly declared it to be 'cruelty,' and added that, if it were necessary, he would consider it an honor to share his last dollar with Oakes Ames. In the darkest hours of the war Mr. Lincoln was heard to say, 'The proffer of money by Wadsworth, Taylor, Dodge, and the cheer of the broad-shouldered Ames, who imperils his own credit to help the government, reassure me.' In New York and at Alexandria, Mr. Ames repeatedly broke up the rings that were formed for the purpose of buying condemned material at a low price. On two different Saturdays I accompanied him to Alexandria on a patriotic mission, when the threats of the conspirators were so numerous and loud that Secretary Stanton thanked him personally for the service, telling him that he had been in greater danger from assassination than the soldiers were of death in battle.

"As a legislator, no man's opinions were more eagerly sought or highly prized than his, particularly in currency and revenue matters. Mr. Conkling would say, 'This you understand, Ames; others do not.' Mr. Thaddeus Stevens, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, on all doubtful matters counted on Oakes Ames to save a measure or kill it, though he never made a motion or a speech. It is known who, in the darkest hours, drew the largest checks to keep the loyal party in power; it was thoroughly accordant with the broad views and the herculean labors of the real builder of the Union Pacific Railroad, facilitating gold-mining, saving millions annually in the movement of troops and their supplies and in appropriations for the Indian Department, and, more than all, binding the Pacific coast in new and perpetual allegiance to the East.

"In the financial extremities of the Union Pacific I have known Mr. Ames to borrow money from Senator Grimes and others at ten per cent. interest, with a pledge of half the profit on the stock used as collateral to his name. Gen. John A. Dix, after years of effort to enlist capital, as the president of the Union Pacific, gave over in despair, until Oakes Ames came to the rescue; and he frequently asserted that the work done by Oakes Ames was of greater

importance to the country than the Erie Canal, and that his name would be placed in history beside that of De Witt Clinton. I could multiply facts and incidents, but they would only be in corroboration of that opinion which underlies the rising spirit that would do even justice, though tardily, to a great name which has been causelessly aspersed.

"If I am a prejudiced friend, it is in part owing to the fact that Oakes Ames once penciled a memorandum promise that at some future day he would begin the founding of a professorship in Iowa College with a gift of six thousand dollars; but he died heart-broken and without money. Then there came a notice from his executors that 'there is no money, but the wishes of father will be sacredly respected when we are able, without reference to legal considerations.' They were respected, when Hon. Oliver Ames sent the college six thousand dollars, with interest. And this is the secret of a partiality for that kind of blood, reflecting both the honor and the generosity of a noble father. Who that saw the brave old man going home to die, wounded in the house of his professed friends, was not profoundly moved? For one, — and I feel that in this sentiment I am not alone, — I would make a journey on foot from my Iowa home to Washington, and there toil for a whole year, to see tardy justice done to the fame of this man, who forgot himself in his devotion to his country."

FROM WILLIAM S. EATON, ESQ., OF BOSTON.

"I had bought a note signed by Thomas Douglass, I think for about five thousand dollars. Shortly after, I met Mr. Oakes Ames on State Street, and asked him about Douglass' standing and credit. He answered cautiously, saying that the product of your works was so large that you had to take some risks which might not be first-class, in order to distribute your manufactures widely; but that he thought Douglass was good, and was a regular buyer from you. I asked him what he would buy the note for, describing the one I held. He named a rate, and I accepted it. He said, 'Well, I cannot take it now, as I am just going away for several days, but will come to your office and get it when I return.'

"Before he returned Douglass failed. A week after, your father came in and asked for the note. I said, 'Douglass has failed, and I have no claim on you for the amount.' He replied, 'He had n't failed when I agreed to take the note. Take off the interest, and I will give you a check.' And he did so.

I have told this story to many of our merchants, and do not find one who knew your father who is at all surprised at it ; which shows the estimate in which he was held by his fellow-citizens."

FROM AARON S. REID, ESQ., OF NEW YORK.

"I knew your father intimately for many years, my acquaintance dating back, perhaps, before your birth. I know of no man whose memory I hold in greater esteem, for he was to my mind the embodiment of truth and honor. When his word was passed it could be depended on as much as his bond ; and in all his dealings I invariably found him honorable and just. I could narrate to you many incidents which confirmed in me the great respect I had for him, but will mention only two.

"I met him one day during the war, at a time when I supposed he was elsewhere ; and on my expressing surprise at seeing him in New York, he told me there was going to be a sale of old iron by the government ; he was going to protect the government from speculators, and to see that fair prices were realized. This regard for the interests of the government, at a time when so many were grasping all they could, was to me a striking proof of his great patriotism.

"At another time, after I had been utterly ruined through the effects of the war on my Southern customers, I met him on the street. He inquired what I was doing. I told him I was doing nothing, but thought I could get business if I had the capital. He said in reply that he had no idle money at the time, but that if his notes for \$10,000 would be of any benefit to me they were at my command. Perhaps the amount named was \$20,000. The financial condition I was then in made the offer one of great generosity, — one I shall always remember, as friends in adversity are always scarce. But that was his opportunity."

FROM GAMALIEL BRADFORD, ESQ., OF BOSTON.

"I remember perfectly when Mr. Ames was offering the Credit Mobilier stock, with all the government grants and privileges, freely on State Street, at ninety-five cents on the dollar. I knew that one of our oldest and most distinguished bank presidents declined to buy it on the ground of excessive risk in building a railroad through such a country ; and that one of our richest private bankers, after a whole morning of explanation from Mr. Ames,

refused on the same ground to have anything to do with it. I know that Mr. Ames, merely to oblige a business friend, gave him, when he took some of the stock, a written agreement to take it back at the holder's option at any time within four months. I heard one of the largest railroad builders and presidents in the country say, at a public dinner given him by his associates, that the Union Pacific was a noble enterprise, and would enrich their descendants, but that it was too big for him to go into.

"I myself bought of Mr. Ames at ninety-five per cent. such an amount as I could afford to lose, as I thought it an even chance whether I did or not.

"The fact is the public were so exasperated by the numerous reports, whether true or false, of secret intrigue and corruption that they pounced on the first scapegoat which presented itself. In such cases it usually happens that the great rascals cover up their tracks, and the innocent, or least guilty, fall as victims. The very simplicity of Mr. Ames' famous phrase, 'to put it where it would do the most good,' is conclusive to my mind, knowing him as I did, that he had not the faintest conception of the construction which would be placed upon it. As an ambitious man, he had, besides the idea of making money, that of connecting his name with the most splendid material achievement of the century. To find himself, after the work was completed, regarded by Congress as a criminal was too much. I have never doubted that he was killed by act of Congress as completely as if that body had condemned him to steel or poison."

FROM HON. MARSHALL P. WILDER.

"I rejoice to learn that there is to be an application to Congress to wipe out from its records that most unwise, unjust, and cruel censure of your honored father, and I beg the privilege of adding my name and influence (if I have any) to blot out this most improvident act of our national assembly, which otherwise must forever be a disgrace to American history.

"It was my privilege to have been well acquainted with him (in fact, with his father and his brother Oliver), and I know of no more upright or worthy men in our community for consistency of character, integrity of heart, or kindness of disposition. It is therefore a foul stain of ingratitude on the escutcheon of our nation's fame to allow this censure of a most benevolent and patriotic deed to exist in the records of its proceedings.

"Oakes Ames was one of the greatest benefactors of our age! When we

think of his benefactions to mankind in opening up across our continent a great highway for the nations of the world, and the gratitude which will forever live in the hearts of mankind for this wonderful act, we feel that his memory and worth will be honored and cherished while benevolence is appreciated, or worthy deeds shall have a place in the heart of man. Oakes Ames is dead! but as time advances posterity will more and more be grateful for his great benefactions, and will give him a place among those philanthropists whose labors and names shall live when monuments shall have crumbled into dust."

FROM HON. EFFINGHAM H. NICHOLS, OF NEW YORK.

"I see that a resolution has been introduced in the Legislature of Massachusetts, requesting their Representatives in Congress to initiate measures, with a view to expunge from the minutes of the House of Representatives the vote of censure passed in March, 1873, on your honored father, the late Hon. Oakes Ames.

"The extraordinary reports which were made in February, 1873, by the two committees of the House, known as the Poland Committee and Wilson Committee, are matters of history. The *one* found Mr. Ames guilty of bribery and recommended his expulsion. The *other* directed the Secretary of the Treasury (in face of law) to retain all the money earned by the Union Pacific Railroad Company for government transportation, and also directed the Attorney-General to bring an action at once against the Union Pacific Railroad Company and the stockholders of the Construction Company, called the Credit Mobilier, for the purpose of determining, first, what frauds, if any, had been committed; and, second, what profits had been made, and whether the same should not be paid to the United States. Time has shown that both these reports had their origin in public clamor and popular prejudice, and were without a shadow of foundation, as respects either facts or law.

"As to the report of the Poland Committee, the House was convinced that the committee had gone too far, and a vote of censure was passed in the place of expulsion.

"The report of the Wilson Committee was adopted, and in due time the matter came before the courts of the country. In an action brought by the Union Pacific Railroad Company, that company recovered the transportation money unjustly withheld by the Secretary of the Treasury; and in the action

brought by the Attorney-General against the Company and the Stockholders of the Credit Mobilier (which action was brought in the District of Connecticut, where all the defendants were obliged to appear and answer, no matter where they resided), it was decided, and on appeal the decision confirmed, by the Supreme Court of the United States, that there was no ground upon which the United States could establish any claim whatever against any of the defendants.

"Fortunately the action of the Wilson Committee was comparatively harmless, except as to the costs and expenses to which innocent parties were subjected, and the financial embarrassments which grew out of the delay incident thereto. The calm and considerate action of the courts stood in strange contrast with that of a committee of politicians, swayed and governed by public clamor, popular prejudice, and personal considerations.

"Not so with the action of the Poland Committee. The wrong which they initiated was then and there consummated, and a vote of censure passed upon one of the most honest, sincere, frank, and far-seeing of public men.

"It was my privilege to know the Hon. Oakes Ames well, and to be on terms of comparative intimacy with him for many years. He was a man of great simplicity, a man of sterling integrity, a man of the strictest economy in all matters relating to himself, but liberal and broad-gauged in all matters appertaining to the public welfare and the well-being and happiness of his friends and associates. Bribery and corruption never entered his thoughts. As respects any legislation in reference to the Union Pacific Railroad Company, there was no motive for bribery. All the necessary acts of Congress in reference thereto had been passed. The road was completed in 1868, and from July 2, 1864, to the date of the censure in March, 1873, no act of importance in relation to the Union Pacific Railroad Company was passed, or attempted to be passed, except the act of December 20, 1867, authorizing the removal of the Union Pacific Railroad office from the city of New York to Boston.

"It was not till 1865 that Mr. Ames became interested in the construction of the road. He was urged to take part in it. The work to be accomplished was great. History furnished no parallel. The Rebellion had disturbed finances, and securities were at a large discount. Both materials and labor were commanding high prices. There was still danger that we might lose our possessions on the Pacific Coast. In comparison with it the Appian Way,

extending from Rome to Brundisium, a distance of about 350 miles, the construction of which exhausted the Roman Treasury, paled into insignificance.

"The motive that actuated Mr. Ames could not have been other than the satisfaction of taking part in a great public work of incalculable importance to the government and country. In August, 1867, he undertook the task of completing the road, and in time he accomplished it. It cost him his fortune; nay, more, as it proved in the end, it cost him his life.

"When I consider these facts, and recall your honored father and that kindness of heart and simplicity of manner which so endeared him to his friends and associates, I have grave doubts about the propriety of the resolution introduced in your Legislature, to which I have referred. I would rather read in the public enactments of the Legislature of the old Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the State where he was born and lived and died, resolutions expressing their faith and confidence in their late fellow-citizen, Oakes Ames, and commending his example to the on-coming generations as that of a great public benefactor; and leave to the House of Representatives of the United States to volunteer such action, as respects its records, as time and a recurring sense of justice shall dictate.

"The same public clamor which existed in the days of Pontius Pilate has ever since been sounding down through the centuries, and in its progress demanded many a victim among the great and good.

"Your father has left an honorable name — a name which will live in history when the granite monument to his memory and that of his brother, on the summit of the Rocky Mountains, shall have crumbled to dust, and the names of his calumniators shall have been forgotten."

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